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MELVILLE'S ETHNOGRAPHY IN TYPEE

by

BONNIE JOAN DEWART

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Melville's Ethnography in Typee, submitted by Bonnie Joan Dewart in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an examination of Melville's use of ethnography in Typee. It is an exploration of the significant changes which Melville made in the sources of his account of Polynesian life; the various functions of ethnographic information in the work; and his handling of factual material within a fictional framework of mystery and suspense.

Chapter I outlines the changing attitudes of critics from 1846 to the present towards the role of factual material in Typee. It also explains the major concern of the thesis which is to discover whether the detailing of the Typees' idyllic life conflicts with the impressions created by the techniques of suspense.

Chapter II is an analysis of Melville's specific changes in the information gathered from his predecessors' travel books. Through examples, the patterns which govern Melville's borrowings emerge. In some cases Melville's selective principle is thematic, choosing, for example, only such information as will corroborate his portrayal of the Typees as noble savages. In other instances, Melville selects incidents related by his precursors which are easily adapted into dramatic anecdotes or which heighten humorous characterizations. But in spite of the successful integration of some of the ethnographic matter into the narrative, there remains a large amount of fact which contributes little to either romance or drama.

Chapter III examines the cumulative effect which anthropological information has upon the themes of adventure and suspense. Melville's rejection of the usual procedures of travel literature does not finally

prevent his own work from falling into the pitfalls which he points out. Typee is finally restricted by the information which it must include.

The fictional aspects of the book dissipate their effect because both the methods and the style of narrative drama are in conflict with the demands of scientific exposition.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND TO THE QUESTIONS

Since the publication of Typee in 1846, Melville's first book has been the cause of debate in literary circles. The problem originally centred on the question of whether the work was fiction or fact. In the United States, readers and reviewers in the nineteenth century generally classified Typee as a romantic, but non-fictional travel account. Charles Anderson's article, "Contemporary American Opinions of Typee and Omoo," reveals that twelve of fifteen review articles in American periodicals accepted the work as a more or less faithful account of the author's adventure in Polynesia.[1] Only three articles considered the work a fabrication; the reviewers for American Review, the New Englander and Knickerbocker Magazine all felt justified in chastising the author for romancing that which had been "put forth as a simple record of actual experience."[2] Merrell Davis gives evidence of two more reviewers who were disturbed by certain of Typee's less than credible incidents; the Evangelist and the Morning Courier and New York Enquirer "refused to accept its reliability" as a true account of travels.[3] Generally, however, the readers responded to the pleasant style and novelty of the young sailor's story, just as Freeman Hunt for Merchant's Magazine and Commercial Review did when he said of Typee that it had "all the elements of a popular book--novelty, originality of style and matter, and deep interest from first to last. . . . The faithfulness of the descriptions and narrative give it a peculiar charm."[4]

In England, where the book was first published, the reviewers were more sceptical of the work's veracity. The reviews in the Athenaeum, the Spectator, the Examiner and John Bull all raised the question of the truth of the work. Like the writer for John Bull, many of the English could not believe that a common sailor could have written the literary prose in Typee.[5] Having been published, however, in John Murray's "Home and Colonial Library"[6] as an authentic travelogue, it was still classified as non-fiction as the records of Mudie's Select Library of 1896 show.[7]

In spite of the questions raised by doubtful reviewers, Typee's appeal as a travel book written in a racy style was strong. Its continuing popularity caused its author some impatience five years after its publication; he exclaimed in a letter to Hawthorne, "To go down to posterity is bad enough, any way; but to go down as a 'man who lived among the cannibals'!"[8] But Melville's disparagement of his fame only confirms Anderson's conclusion, based on the evidence of reviews, that "Of all Melville's books, it would seem Typee struck the most congenial note among his contemporaries."[9]

Typee is still a very readable book; however, the consensus among twentieth century critics and readers on the book's value as an autobiographical account of Melville's stay in the Marquesas has changed. The research of Charles Anderson, Robert Forsythe and Ida Leeson[10] has uncovered the fact that Melville's stay on Nukahiva was much shorter than the four months' residence recorded in Typee. Melville's actual residence on the island began with his desertion from the Acushnet on July 9, 1842, as recorded in the affidavit of Captain Pease. Melville left his island paradise on August 9, 1842, on board the whaler Lucy Ann after a

bare four week sojourn.[11]

Anderson's study of Melville's real adventures in the South Seas uncovered other interesting evidence which had bearing on the truth of Typee as a travel account. Anderson found that Melville's record of native life and habits tallied with the accounts of previous voyagers quite simply because Melville used the previous accounts as his source materials; he drew on the scientifically detailed works for the details, the incidents and even the phraseology of his own narrative.[12] In writing Typee Melville depended extensively on Rev. Charles Stewart's A Visit to the South Seas (1832), and on Captain David Porter's Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean (1815); he also selected ethnographic information from G. H. Von Langsdorff's Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World (1813), Otto Von Kotzebue's A Voyage of Discovery (1821) and A New Voyage Round the World (1830), William Ellis' Polynesian Researches (1831), and the anonymously written Circumnavigation of the Globe (1837).

The discovery of Melville's indebtedness to source materials led to the conclusion that much of the work, which had advertised itself as autobiographical fact,[13] was in reality, fact borrowed from others' experiences; what had seemed, then, like straight reporting was revealed as fiction. Colourful incidents such as Kolory's abusive treatment of the "crack" god Moa Artua had their germ in Porter's account of the natives' treatment of a small clothed idol--and, as Anderson notes in citing the passage, "Melville always improved upon his original."[14] Melville's fictionalized ethnography was beginning to be seen as much more interesting than the plain truth.

Anderson offers various explanations for Melville's fictionalizing;

he concludes that "Melville's own acquaintance with Marquesan life may have been so brief, so limited, and so imperfect that he was forced to turn to printed authorities for the facts necessary to give substance to his narrative."[15] It also becomes apparent to a reader who is familiar with the travel sources that Melville chose the most entertaining incidents for dramatic treatment. Mumford's conclusion that "he is a writer who knows that one wants everything in a travel book except the tedium and fatigue of actuality"[16] is at least partially substantiated by the ethnographic material, scattered almost at random in the original sources, which is often integrated by Melville into his story as a successful means of dramatic characterization. It is an inescapable fact, however, that Typee contains a much larger quantity of factual material than is usual for a work which does not want to bore the reader with actuality. Nineteen of Typee's thirty-four chapters, not including the Appendix and Sequel, are predominantly ethnographic descriptions of life in the Edenic valley.[17] The other fifteen chapters contain scattered pieces of historical, geographical and ethnographic information. In the course of his narrative Melville covers the culinary, agricultural, marital, religious, architectural, economic and social customs of his hosts. Obviously it would be a mistake to consider Typee without considering in more detail the effect which his use of ethnographic material has on the dramatic and narrative elements of the story.

It is perhaps unfortunate that after the discovery of Melville's dependence on source material and his fictional extension of the period of his residency, critics could no longer see Typee as a record of travels. Critics of the twentieth century tend to see Typee as a loosely organized novel. This has caused them to concentrate on the story or

plot of the escape-capture narrative without giving proper attention to the heavy weight of sheer fact. Analyses of the fictional elements range from the relatively straightforward readings of F. O. Matthiessen and Warner Berthoff to the symbolic interpretations of D. H. Lawrence, Richard Chase, James Babin, Milton Stern, and Robert Stanton.

Those critics who want to discuss Typee as a novel usually adopt one of the following positions when it comes time to treat the non-fictional material. The commentator may attempt to ignore the preponderance of factual material, as Robert Stanton does in his characterization of Typee as a Miltonic, archetypal work in which Tommo, as a civilized man, plays the role of Satan to the innocent and uncorrupted natives cast as Adams and Eves.[18] As an alternative to this, the critic may attempt to justify Melville's inclusion of expository material by seeing it as thematically important. J. A. Ward makes a fair attempt at this, stating that Tommo's main effort is to understand the islanders and their reasons for keeping him in the valley--thus his recounting of their habits is part of the attempt to know them through experience.[19] William Dillingham chooses a middle-way; while briefly mentioning Melville's dependence on travel writers' factual material, he chooses to sidestep the effects of this matter on the fiction by treating Typee as an "artistic creation" because it portrays "the inner life of a hero named Tommo."[20]

The problem with these responses is that discussion is limited to the narrative sections of Typee. The critics do not really deal with the long sequence from chapters eleven to thirty-one which is almost exclusively ethnographic description. Critics who insist that Typee is a novel with symbolic themes want to apply the same analytical perspective

which is so appropriate in the analysis of Melville's mature work. Commentators are hesitant to admit that Moby-Dick, Benito Cereno and Billy Budd are essentially different from Typee. In Melville's later works, there is a "real balance between fact and meaning"[21] which is not found in Typee. In truth, any symbolic meaning is most often supplied by ingenious critics who turn Typee into another Heart of Darkness. In the process they drift further and further away from the book itself--the picture which is presented is only achieved by distorting Typee's plot or by conveniently skirting the problem of the digressiveness of most of the ethnography. But finally many of them have to acknowledge the unwieldiness of much of Typee's fact. Charles Feidelson, who would like to maintain that Melville was a conscious artist aware of the symbolic value of his facts from first to last,[22] is forced to admit that "certainly the book is primarily a travelogue; its scene is of the solid earth; and the language does not often invite a symbolistic interpretation."[23]

On the other hand, scholars like Charles Anderson and Robert Forsythe also present a way of looking at Typee which does not allow the reader to deal critically with all the facets of the book. While both men give us extremely useful information about Melville's actual experiences in Polynesia and his reliance on outside information for the details in his first book, the suspense elements of the story are treated as a separable part of the work; their relation to the ethnographic fact is never examined and so the book is split into two parts. Thus the biographer and the scientist treat Typee as a scientific work, the worth of which is gauged solely in relation to its adherence to autobiographical truth or ethnographic fact. Melville's use of fictional devices, mystery, suspense and romance, in his attempt to give some framework for the source-

drawn material, is seen as sleight of hand--any positive aspects of the fiction become irrelevant. Anderson's point of view leads him to try constantly to rid Typee of its 'veneer':

> Some of these embellishments are dramatic exaggerations, such as the overemphasis on the dangers of cannibalism to the white man; others are purely romantic, such as the extravagant praise of their physical beauty and their moral perfection. Stripping Typee of its Rousseauistic overplus, the careful reader can find a central core of fact that will give him a fairly comprehensive understanding of ancient Marquesan culture, for the amount of specific misinformation--exclusive of obvious fictions --is relatively inconsiderable.[24]

Anderson wants to expose and dismiss the "obvious fictions" so that the bare bones of truth are revealed. Treating the work in this way, each piece of 'extraneous' fiction is tossed aside with little or no examination of its place and function in relation to the anthropological information.

Neither Anderson's approach nor the analysis of Typee as a fully structured symbolic novel has given a complete picture of Melville's particular problems in writing a mixture of fiction and travelogue. My point is that in order to appreciate the work, the critic should first analyze Melville's use of source materials and ethnographic particularity and then study the interaction of such material with the fictional framework. To examine each in the light of the purposes and methods of the other is to try for an understanding of all of the material in Typee. The present study attempts to deal first with the fact and then with the fact and fiction in relation to each other.

In order to do this, this thesis goes beyond the limits of a study of Melville's method of composition. Charles Anderson, and others like Russell Thomas,[25] have demonstrated that Melville relied on borrowed

material in his presentation of native life. Thanks to their diligent work, it is possible to go on to consider questions which arise in the light of their discoveries. Answers to such questions as whether or not Melville's use of ethnographic fact was governed by a selective principle, one, say, dictated by a particular thematic or structural purpose, are now possible. As Anderson notes, "part of what he borrowed was inaccurate, and much of what he passed by was both accurate and appropriate [that is, in terms of a travel book's usual information]."[26] Anderson does not probe much further into the reasons for the choice of information other than to consider the truth or falsity of Melville's anthropological intelligence. Because he is not concerned with fictional values in Typee, Anderson is also not really interested in the nature and significance of the changes Melville made in his use of source material, although he does comment on the facts which Melville deliberately misrepresents.

Very few critics, J. A. Ward being an exception, stop to ponder the question of whether or not Melville's presentation of factual, concrete matter goes beyond a scientific, deductive, empirical method of seeing and describing. Aside from passing comments, such as Merrell Davis's on the inconsistencies of Tommo's attitude towards the natives,[27] little time has been spent in examining discrepancies between Melville's role and stance as an objective ethnographer and the subjective, inductive attitude evidenced in his narrator's fear of possible cannibalism. The point of such a concern is that it has implications for the consideration of the suspense elements of the book. And it is these aspects of the book which distinguish it immediately from the usual travel narrative.

In the travel books which Melville knew and used, there was no

attempt to imbue the account with either unity or thematic purpose. In contrast Melville's own travel account, correctly dealing with ethnographic information, also attempts to tell a suspense story. The movement in the tale is from suspense aroused through chapters one to ten, to relaxation in the idyllic valley in chapters eleven to thirty-one, back to renewed tension and final escape in chapters thirty-two to thirty-four. Aside from the obvious fact that the middle chapters split the book in two, no one has yet examined the effect which this long section has on the framework of adventure and suspense. This aspect of Typee is particularly explored in the present study.

Although this thesis concerns itself only with the role of factual material in Melville's first work, the conclusions of the study may have application towards an understanding of many of the later novels. A great deal of work has been done on Melville's habit of using source material, a habit that continued throughout his career.[28] Sources for White-Jacket, Redburn, Omoo, Mardi, Moby-Dick and other works have been unearthed by diligent scholars. Study of Melville's method of composition has revealed that he was increasingly capable of successfully integrating much diverse material into the plots of some of his later works. Essays such as Ward's on "The Function of the Cetological Chapters in Moby-Dick" deal with the important question of the place of large amounts of factual material in that novel. Critical statements about the function and handling of factual material in Moby-Dick by Ward, Matthiessen, Nathalia Wright and others[29] serve to point the way in a similar examination of Typee. The way in which Melville uses cetological lore in Moby-Dick as a factual grounding for a larger reality which is the symbolic equivalent of the physical fact,[30] both suggests the possibilities for interpreting

and yet reveals the limitations of his first book. Ward points out that while the cetological chapters function "as the concrete basis for an adjacent scene,"[31] they also serve a metaphorical function in spite of their appearance as formal, scientific fact.[32] The importance of determining whether or not Melville manages to use ethnography for any purpose other than scientific thoroughness is that it enables the critic to evaluate Typee properly as a work of art.

It thus becomes apparent that the key to understanding Melville's artistic progress rests in a thorough understanding of the function of source material in his work. Recognizing that the principal structural device in Typee is the adventure plot, Joan Joffe Hall says that the study of Melville's use of interpolations is a very productive one. The importance of such an analysis is due to the fact that "since he did not write a novel that was on the whole successful until he integrated this [expository] material with the plot, the study of his interpolations is a fruitful way to examine some of the critical failures and successes of his work."[33]

Finally, let me explain briefly why this thesis is concerned only with Typee and not with Omoo which is generally considered as the companion piece of the first book. From the perspective of this study, it became apparent that Omoo is essentially different in nature from Typee because it falls into the category of picaresque narrative; therefore, the plot structure is negligible as an important and shaping influence on the expository material. Typee, for all the weaknesses of its structure, does have a plot which provides a discernible beginning, middle and end. The integration of factual material in Omoo was a far easier task for Melville; the story's episodic structure lends itself to

scattered interpolations, descriptions, and reactions. In Omoo there are nothing like the insubstantial intuitions of evil which cause Tommo to forget his objectivity. Omoo concentrates almost exclusively on that other aspect of Typee, the "scientific," actual facts of Polynesian life. The narrator of Omoo is more consistently objective and analytic than Tommo, who often sees the natives from the perspective of a captive victim. Therefore the tension between factual material and fictional element is at a minimum in Omoo. Melville's use of ethnography in that book is complementary to his extended analysis of the good and evil in the native way of life. His factual basis leads naturally to a criticism of the influence of civilization on the simple islanders. There is not, as there is in Typee, a conflict between the picture of life presented by ethnography and the final impressions which the narrator wants to leave with the reader.

CHAPTER II

MELVILLE AND HIS SOURCES: THE FUNCTION OF SELECTIVE ETHNOGRAPHY

With the increase in the number of exploratory and scientific expeditions carried out in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there was a corresponding proliferation of published accounts of these voyages.[1] Navigators like James Cook and David Porter, Edmund Fanning and Charles Wilkes were typical of those who felt it incumbent upon themselves not only to explore and take notes, but also to circulate detailed studies of the lands and peoples they had seen, both for the reference of future voyagers and the information of the general public.[2] Captain Cook's account, with its meticulous record of the cultural and social habits of Pacific Islanders, became the model for subsequent anthropological reporters. W. Patrick Strauss indicates the general order and purview of travel accounts following in Cook's pattern:

> Cook would begin with a geographical description of the area and then describe the natives themselves. He would treat such varied topics as the practise of tattooing; tabus and various religious rites; native music, sports, amusements and other social customs; government, industry and agriculture, the language of the natives; and even their seamanship.[3]

Interest in the scientific detailing of native cultures was growing in nineteenth century America. In 1842 the American Ethnological Society was founded in New York; in 1845 it published the first volumes of its transactions.[4] Other, more public sources of information were the newspapers, particularly those of Nantucket, Salem and Boston which published accounts of exotic peoples.[5] The records of missionaries were also

major sources for detailed descriptions of life in the South Seas.

William Ellis, a missionary who spent nearly eight years among the natives of various Pacific islands, was one of those who felt that it was vitally important to record a fast disappearing way of life. With the coming of the white man and increased traffic of the whaling and trading ships, the native culture was quickly being eroded. Beside carrying out his job of evangelizing, during his residence in Polynesia, Ellis saw an opportunity to "collect . . . information on various subjects relative to the country and its inhabitants."[6] His anthropological interests were sharpened by his awareness that the islanders were forgetting ancient customs and cultural practices:

> All their usages of antiquity having been entirely superseded by the new order of things that has followed the subversion of their former system, the knowledge of but few of them is retained by the majority of the inhabitants, while the rising generation is growing up in total ignorance of all that distinguished their ancestors from themselves. The present, therefore, seems to be the only time in which a variety of facts, connected with the former state of the Inhabitants, can be secured; and to furnish, as far as possible, an authentic record of these, and thus preserve them from oblivion [is the object of this record] . . . .[7]

Some of the others who wrote ethnographic accounts were not as conscious of their unique opportunity as was Ellis, but in their travel records they followed the pattern which had become quite firmly established. Their narratives contained sketches of appearance, clothing, food and social customs written in reportorial style with at least an attempt at thoroughness of detail. However, the navigators in particular operated under handicaps which affected their ability to furnish complete and wholly accurate information. First, they usually spent only a short period of time in each place visited which made it impossible to witness at firsthand sufficient evidence of a culture. Second, it was usually

necessary to rely on interpreters, often white sailors now living among the natives. As G. H. Von Langsdorff admits, his account depends greatly on the reliability of Jean Baptiste Cabri, a Frenchman who had "gone native." Most of Langsdorff's account of the Marquesans is based on the testimony of others, not on his own observations.[8] Because of the limited chances for lengthy acquaintance with natives, it also became customary for travel writers to consult previous travelogues. Often travel accounts became literary compilations because material was needed to supply details not personally observed, but more often the writer simply checked his account against what had gone before as part of his scholarly research into his subject.[9]

When Melville decided to write an account of his adventures in the Marquesas, he was already aware of a body of literature which could be used for reference.[10] What may have begun as mere consultation could soon have developed into a realization that his memory of events three years before was not nearly sharp enough to give the sort of itemization which was customary in travel records. This difficulty could be overcome, as Melville must have seen, through the borrowing of facts recorded by his precursors. The books covered the established topics, and presented different attitudes to the customs described. William Ellis and Charles Stewart were usually pious, sometimes "holier-than-thou," in their outlook; David Porter and G. H. Von Langsdorff tended to be excitable and more romantic; Otto Von Kotzebue was very sympathetic to the islanders' culture and strongly anti-missionary. Presented with such an array of source materials, Melville could easily choose among them for the necessary facts. The process was made easier because only two of the travellers had actually visited Typee itself. David Porter and Charles Stewart

after him had actually seen the isolated tribe. The others were familiar with the Marquesas if not the Typees, and provided information about customs such as tattooing and agriculture of the kind practiced in Typee.

Melville's indebtedness to the works of his predecessors has been demonstrated by scholars like Charles Anderson. What have not been discussed completely are the significant changes which he made in his rendition of borrowed facts. The uses to which detailed ethnography is put, important differences in style, tone and phrasing, point to the lessons Melville learned from his sources and the changes which he wrought as an artist. In some cases the resemblance between Typee and a source is unmistakable, with obvious connections in phrasing and details. In other instances, although the facts are the same, the rendition in Typee is quite novel. In this chapter, I will present specific examples of parallel passages as cases representing the range of uses to which ethnography has been put by Melville; they will also demonstrate the patterns of the changes made in the source material.

The passages which stand out most clearly as adaptations are those in which the changes are merely of an editorial nature. Such passages usually relate facts about which there can be no dispute--these include geographical setting and the history of discovery which seldom call for any evaluative judgments from the author. In these cases, Melville rearranges paragraphs, grouping together scattered pieces of information which function to make the presentation neater, although seldom more vivacious. In this first example, Melville alters order and paraphrases some of the information, but the material is still recognizably Stewart's.[11]

Stewart:

The first destination of the Vincennes is to the Washington Islands--a group in the vicinity of the Marques de Mendoca's, and frequently included with them under the general appellation of the 'Marquesas.' They bear a relation to these last, both in position and proximity, similar to that which the Society Islands do to the Georgian group, a few degrees farther west.

Though the Marquesas were discovered by a Spanish Voyager so early as the year 1595, the Washington Group--scarce a degree distant to the northwest from them--remained unknown to the world till 1791, when they were first seen by Captain Ingraham of Boston, and in the succeeding year visited by Captain Roberts, of the same place, who gave them the name by which they are now generally designated, and to which by established usage in such cases, they are justly entitled.

They are three in number--Huahuka, Nukuhiva, or Nuuhiva, and Uapou, forming a triangle by their relative position to each other, the points of which are included with the parallels of 8° 38' and 9° 32' S. latitude and 139° 20' and 140° 10' W. longitude from Greenwich. . . . Nukuhiva--twenty miles in length, and nearly the same breadth, and having three or four good harbors on its coast--is much the largest and most important of the three; and that alone which ships have frequented. It is the island, you will recollect, at which Commodore Porter refitted his squadron during the late war between the United States and Great Britain: and is the principal scene of the journal which he subsequently placed before the world. The inhabitants are now, as they then were, in an entire state of nature: and their primeval condition is in every respect unchanged, except it may be in an addition of corruption--among those in the immediate vicinity of the harbor occasionally visited by ships--from a licentious intercourse with unprincipled white men from civilized and Christian countries.

. . . . . .

The inhabitants of the Marquesas [that is, Southern Islands], radically the same people [as the inhabitants of Nukahiva], are both physically and morally in circumstances precisely similar; . . . the account I shall give, and every observation we shall make, on the Nukuhivans, will apply essentially to them.

. . . . . .

The distance from Tower Bluff to the entrance of Taeohae, or Massachusetts Bay, as Commodore Porter called it, is about eight miles. . . . [12]

Melville:

This island, although generally called one of the Marquesas, is by some navigators considered as forming one of a distinct cluster, comprising the islands of Ruhooka, Ropo, and Nukuheva; upon which three the appellation of the Washington Group has been bestowed. They form a triangle, and

lie within the parallels of 8° 38' and 9° 32' South latitude, and 139° 20' and 140° 10' West longitude from Greenwich. With how little propriety they are to be regarded as forming a separate group will be at once apparent, when it is considered that they lie in the immediate vicinity of the other islands, that is to say, less than a degree to the north-west of them; that their inhabitants speak the Marquesan dialect, and that their laws, religion, and general customs are identical. The only reason why they were ever thus arbitrarily distinguished, may be attributed to the singular fact, that their existence was altogether unknown to the world until the year 1791, when they were discovered by Captain Ingraham, of Boston, Massachusetts, nearly two centuries after the discovery of the adjacent islands by the agent of the Spanish viceroy. . . .

Nukuheva is the most important of these islands, being the only one at which ships are much in the habit of touching, and is celebrated as being the place where the adventurous Captain Porter refitted his ships during the late war between England and the United States, and whence he sallied out upon the large whaling fleet then sailing under the enemy's flag in the surrounding seas. This island is about twenty miles in length and nearly as many in breadth. It has three good harbors on its coast; the largest and best of which is called by the people living in its vicinity 'Tyohee,' and by Captain Porter was denominated Massachusetts Bay. . . . Its inhabitants have become somewhat corrupted, owing to their recent commerce with Europeans; but so far as regards their peculiar customs and general mode of life, they retain their original primitive character, remaining very nearly in the same state of nature in which they were first beheld by white men. The hostile clans, residing in the more remote sections of the island, and very seldom holding any communication with foreigners, are in every respect unchanged from their earliest known condition.[13]

One of the more obvious achievements of Melville's account is that it neatly draws together and thus concentrates the effect of scattered information in Stewart's account. Melville's first paragraph compares favorably with Stewart's passage which takes three different paragraphs to discuss the same details. Beginning with a general discussion of the location and history of discovery, found midway through Stewart's account, Melville tightly organizes the interrelated points, including Stewart's detached reference to the cultural similarities between the North and South Marquesas. Melville's sentences follow each other in a logical order; Stewart's paragraphs contain digressions which prevent the paragraph being used as a structural unit--each paragraph

simply gathers in points not made in the one before. As a result, the divisions in his order seem arbitrary; Melville's reordering corrects this fault.

Melville's second paragraph closely follows the order and wording of Stewart's last paragraph on page 128. We are given the historical importance of the island, and a brief outline of its physical appearance. While Stewart tends simply to string his facts together with flat conjunctions--"twenty miles in length, and nearly the same breadth, and having three or four good harbors on its coast"--Melville's sentences expressing the same facts, in almost identical words, are short and neat; he deals with one idea before moving on to the next. The impression this leaves on the reader is of a well-ordered mind, crisply arranging and dispatching the necessary facts.

Melville also manages to bring about a slight shift in emphasis through reorganization. In the conclusion to his second paragraph, Melville first mentions the corruption brought about by the presence of Europeans; but the more important points for the romantic writer, the remoteness of location and primitive, exotic character of the islanders, are given more prominence by placing these facts at the end of the exposition. This shifts the sense of what Stewart means, for he says that the natives are in "an entire state of nature" save for the corruption now visible after contact with white men. Melville's passage stresses the cultural continuity in spite of corruption, especially in those tribes removed from the frequented bays. The difference is not great, but it is pointed by the shift in emphasis. This would have little importance if it were an isolated case, but Melville's consistent portrayal of the Typees as uncorrupted and pure, in the tradition of the romantic notion

of the noble savage, makes the change more significant here.

One notices that the language of the two passages is strikingly similar. Both are written in denotative, formal prose which presents the facts in a straightforward manner. The authoritative style and the precise details of the description make the facts seem indisputably official, perhaps even more in Melville's version than in Stewart's. Melville includes no hesitations or qualifications in giving the orthography of Nukahiva and the number of its harbors. He also proves from evidence supplied by Stewart that the Washington cluster is a part of the Marquesas.

Coming as it does in Typee after ten pages of writing filled with Tommo's personal thoughts and anticipations as his ship approaches land and a series of humorous, comically exaggerated anecdotes related in hyperbolic language, Melville's formal description of Nukahiva establishes the island as a real place with a history. The very seriousness of the tone contrasts with the previous pages written in a more lighthearted and personal style. After this description the reader knows that the ship is sailing towards a real destination, not simply an exotic dream vision which is conjured up by Tommo's excited imagination.

In another passage which seems to owe a debt to Stewart, Melville exhibits critical judgment in his selection of details; he also manages to make the details function for a larger purpose. Melville's account gives the reader a full awareness of the warrior himself, whereas Stewart's account ends up concentrating on the minute details of costume. Stewart:

. . . two warriors, in full battle-dress, on their way to the Vincennes, came suddenly upon us--both men of noble stature; every limb, in its

muscular proportions, presenting a model for the skill of statuary. Their dress, in every respect alike, was singularly striking and imposing; especially that of the head, which instantly attracted the admiration of the whole party. It consisted of a crescent, three or four inches broad at its greatest breadth, fixed uprightly in front, the lower edge following the line of the hair on the forehead, and the points terminating at each temple immediately above the ears. A neat border, the eighth of an inch wide, ran round the edges, while the middle was entirely filled with small scarlet berries of the abrus precatorius, fastened upon the material of which it was constructed, by a gum which exudes from the bread-fruit tree. The crescent formed the front of a cap fitting closely to the head behind, and the foundation in which the heavy plumage surmounting it is fixed. This plumage consisted of the long, black, and burnished tail-feathers of the cock, the finest I ever saw, those in the centre being more than two feet in length. They were arranged behind the front-piece as closely as possible, and in such a manner as to form the shape of a deeply-pointed chapeau, placed crosswise on the head, the feathers in the centre standing perpendicularly, and becoming more and more vertical, till the lowest at the edges dropped deeply over the shoulders. The ends, falling, from the highest point above the forehead, one over another in a regularly defined curve on either side, played in the air with the gracefulness of an ostrich plume, and imparted to the whole an appearance of richness and taste we had not been led to expect from any of the decorations of the country previously seen.

In their ears, and entirely concealing them, they wore ornaments of light wood, whitened with pipe-clay. They are perfectly flat in front, something in the shape of the natural ear, but much larger, and are fastened by running a long projection on the hind part through slits made in the ears for receiving ornaments. Strings of whale's teeth hung around their necks, and frizzled bunches of human hair, were tied around their wrists and ankles; their loins, also, being girt with thick tufts of the same, over large maros of white tapa. Short mantles of white cloth, tied in a knot on the chest, with long spears, completed the costume.

I scarce remember to have been more suddenly or deeply impressed by any sight, than that of these figures, as they first burst on the view. Their lofty head-dresses, tossing proudly in the wind with the motion of their bold gait, their naked and brawny limbs, and various savage trappings, converted them, for the moment, into seeming giants.[14]

Melville:

At last, when their numbers began to diminish, a superb-looking warrior stooped the towering plumes of his head-dress beneath the low portal, and entered the house. I saw at once that he was some distinguished personage, the natives regarding him with the utmost deference, and making room for him as he approached. His aspect was imposing. The splendid long drooping tail-feathers of the tropical bird, thickly interspersed with the gaudy plumage of the cock, were disposed in an immense upright semicircle upon his head, their lower extremities being fixed in a crescent of guinea-beads which spanned the forehead. Around his neck

were several enormous necklaces of boars' tusks, polished like ivory, and disposed in such a manner as that the longest and largest were upon his capacious chest. Thrust forward through the large apertures in his ears were two small and finely shaped sperm-whale teeth, presenting their cavities in front, stuffed with freshly-plucked leaves, and curiously wrought at the other end into strange little images and devices. These barbaric trinkets, garnished in this manner at their open extremities, and tapering and curving round to a point behind the ear, resembled not a little a pair of cornucopias.

The loins of the warrior were girt about with heavy folds of a dark-colored tappa, hanging before and behind in clusters of braided tassels, while anklets and bracelets of curling human hair completed his unique costume. In his right hand he grasped a beautifully carved paddle-spear, nearly fifteen feet in length, made of the bright koar-wood, one end sharply pointed, and the other flattened like an oar-blade. Hanging obliquely from his girdle by a loop of sinnate was a richly decorated pipe, the slender reed forming its stem was colored with a red pigment, and round it, as well as the idol-bowl, fluttered little streamers of the thinnest tappa.

But that which was most remarkable in the appearance of the splendid islander was the elaborated tattooing displayed on every noble limb. All imaginable lines and curves and figures were delineated over his whole body, and in their grotesque variety and infinite profusion I could only compare them to the crowded grouping of quaint patterns we sometimes see in costly pieces of lacework. The most simple and remarkable of all these ornaments was that which decorated the countenance of the chief. Two broad stripes of tattooing, diverging from the centre of his shaven crown, obliquely crossed both eyes--staining the lids--to a little below either ear, where they united with another stripe which swept in a straight line along the lips and formed the base of the triangle. The warrior, from the excellence of his physical proportions, might certainly have been regarded as one of Nature's noblemen, and the lines drawn upon his face may possibly have denoted his exalted rank. (77-78)

There is little doubt that Stewart's description would enable a wardrobe mistress to recreate the costume of the warrior. In one long paragraph, Stewart concentrates on the headdress, describing it in such minute detail that one can almost picture him walking round and round the warriors, taking careful notes. Melville's description is less practical or ethnographically useful. He condenses the essential facts, but omits such things as the actual lengths and widths of the various pieces. Instead he gives a compact paragraph which details the warrior from the head to the neck, including his ear and neck ornaments. The reader's

attention is focused more dramatically on the majestic aspect of the warrior. Melville accumulates detail, but each piece of information serves to build up a total picture of the distinguished savage. Stewart, who stops the action with introductory remarks like "it consisted of" and "this plumage consisted of," creates a set and static description; Melville omits formal signals and thus points up the effect of "his" accoutrements. Melville also uses action verbs to give dynamic power to his description--he writes that the sperm whale teeth are "thrust forward" through the ears of the savage; Stewart's sentence, by contrast, is a much more ordinary construction which conveys little sense of action--"In their ears, and entirely concealing them, they wore ornaments of light wood."

Melville demonstrates a range in the use of language at the very beginning of the passage. The dignity of the warrior is indicated by the narrator's awe and by the strong sentence, "a superb-looking warrior stooped the towering plumes of his head-dress . . . and entered." Stewart rarely writes with the same force and variety. Melville also manages to derive more dramatic movement in his passage by indicating the reactions of the other natives when the warrior enters. When this initially unidentified warrior becomes Mehevi, the description which functioned as an ethnographic item also serves as a characterization of a noble leader. In fact, from the beginning Melville's description feels more like an individual characterization than an account of a typically attired warrior.

Melville's description of the chief is not as closely related to its source as was the case in the first comparison. Melville achieves a climax in his description by including material which was not a part of

Stewart's account. As Tommo continues to narrate, the strangeness of the tattoo is what really attracts his attention. Melville may have used details supplied by Langsdorff's fairly lengthy account of tattoos, but whatever the source, Melville includes the material here and adds the finishing touch to the picture of the warrior's exotic appearance. This is also the first full description given of facial tattoos which will continue to play a part in the developing story.

Melville shows a stylistic trait here which is in evidence throughout Typee: it is a feature which often sets his descriptive pieces apart from their sources. In the above passage, he likens the ear ornaments to a "pair of cornucopias"; similarly, in his attempt to describe the appearance of the tattoo he resorts to analogy, comparing the intricate designs to the "crowded grouping of quaint patterns we sometimes see in costly pieces of lacework." Generally Melville is comfortable working with highly figurative language, whereas even a writer with Stewart's command of the language feels compelled to stick to a more sober denotation in description. Although Melville's language is not nearly as evocative as it would become in Mardi or Moby-Dick, and though his voice frequently sounds just as dry and official as the source books, we can still perceive in Typee an artist who has a feel for figures and an awareness of the power of language to create vivid images. In so doing, he runs the risk of creating a reality based on subjective impressions; in these cases the artist is more clearly at work than the scientist. An example of this is found in the comparable descriptions of the leaf of the bread-fruit tree. Stewart writes: "The leaf of the bread-fruit is two feet in length, one and more in width and deeply indented."[15] Melville obviously feels that this serviceable depiction

does not give an adequate account of the beauty of the leaf. He writes:

> The leaves of the bread-fruit are of great size, and their edges are cut and scalloped as fantastically as those of a lady's lace collar. As they annually tend towards decay, they almost rival in the brilliant variety of their gradually changing hues the fleeting shades of the expiring dolphin. (114)

Melville foregoes exact measurement for the sensual effect which he can create with figurative language.

Melville's style also tends to exhibit an awareness of the methods which can be used to keep a reader attentive to long passages of description. In the passage on the warrior, Melville varies sentence length which breaks the rhythmic pattern of the description. "His aspect was imposing." This short, plain sentence is followed by a description of the lushness of the warrior's costume and nicely sets off the longer, balanced phrases which follow. The same point made by Stewart is lost in his second sentence which is the same unvaried length as those in the rest of the paragraph.

The next case of an adaptation from a source reveals Melville's ability as a comic storyteller; he turns a scantily outlined incident into a full-scale scene written with energy and flair. Both Porter and Stewart comment on the natives' physical abuse of their deities; Melville's dramatic account vividly illustrates the point.

Porter:

> Observing that they treated all their gods with little respect, frequently catching them by their large ears, drawing my attention to their wide mouths, their flat noses, and large eyes, and pointing out to me, by signs, all their other deformities, I told Wilson to inform them I thought they treated their gods very disrespectfully. . . .[16]

Stewart:

I was attracted, however, across the way by a tabu house, against which three huge images of wood were placed, two with their faces inward towards the thatch, and one with the face outward. I commenced a sketch of them as they stood which being perceived by one of the natives, he immediately, without ceremony, seized the two godships having their backs towards me, and whirled them over with as much carelessness and familiarity as I should have myself, had I been disposed to make thus free with the objects of their superstition. I was somewhat surprised at the little veneration shown for the idols of their own worship, though not ignorant of the great inconsistency often discovered among the heathen, in the grossness of the adulation of their gods at one time, and their disregard and even abuse of them, at another. I recollect to have heard, . . . of instances in which persons, . . . have not only scolded and upbraided, but actually beaten, their images of wood and stone.[17]

Later Stewart adds

. . . the images are literally crumbling into dust. The decay resting upon them, rendered more conspicuous by their deformity, seems already to proclaim [the end of paganism] . . . .[18]

Melville:

In how little reverence these unfortunate deities were held by the natives was on one occasion most convincingly proved to me.--Walking with Kory-Kory through the deepest recesses of the groves, I perceived a curious looking image, about six feet in height, which originally had been placed upright against a low pi-pi, surmounted by a ruinous bamboo temple, but having become fatigued and weak in the knees, was now carelessly leaning against it. The idol was partly concealed by the foliage of a tree which stood near, and whose leafy boughs drooped over the pile of stones, as if to protect the rude fane from the decay to which it was rapidly hastening. The image itself was nothing more than a grotesquely shaped log, carved in the likeness of a portly naked man with the arms clasped over the head, the jaws thrown wide aprt, and its thick shapeless legs bowed into an arch. It was much decayed. The lower part was overgrown with a bright silky moss. Thin spears of grass sprouted from the distended mouth and fringed the outline of the head and arms. His godship had literally attained a green old age. All its prominent points were bruised and battered, or entirely rotted away. The nose had taken its departure, and from the general appearance of the head it might have been supposed that the wooden divinity, in despair at the neglect of its worshippers, had been trying to beat its own brains out against the surrounding trees.

I drew near to inspect more closely this strange object of idolatry; but halted reverently at the distance of two or three paces, out of regard to the religious prejudices of my valet. As soon, however, as Kory-Kory perceived that I was in one of my inquiring, scientific moods,

to my astonishment, he sprang to the side of the idol, and pushing it away from the stones against which it rested, endeavored to make it stand upon its legs. But the divinity had lost the use of them altogether; and while Kory-Kory was trying to prop it up, by placing a stick between it and the pi-pi, the monster fell clumsily to the ground, and would infallibly have broken its neck had not Kory-Kory providentially broken its fall by receiving its whole weight on his own half-crushed back. I never saw the honest fellow in such a rage before. He leaped furiously to his feet, and seizing the stick, began beating the poor image: every moment or two pausing and talking to it in the most violent manner, as if upbraiding it for the accident. When his indignation had subsided a little he whirled the idol about most profanely, so as to give me an opportunity of examining it on all sides. I am quite sure I never should have presumed to have taken such liberties with the god myself, and I was not a little shocked at Kory-Kory's impiety. (178-179)

As Charles Anderson observes, Melville makes the most of Stewart's opinions on the decayed state of idol worship among the natives.[19] In comparing Melville's account with Porter's and Stewart's, one can see that Melville already has the artist's sense of scene and occasion. He uses genuine ethnographic details, such as the size and appearance of the idol, as background for an extended and characterizing anecdote. The evidence of decaying idols becomes high comedy as Melville describes the grass growing from the mouth and head of the "godship who had literally attained a green old age." The ethnographer's formal prose, and Stewart's moralizing about the natives' behaviour, are transformed by Melville's more colloquial style, so that even the final statement, "I was not a little shocked at Kory-Kory's impiety," is humorous, obviously understating the attitude of Tommo's faithful servant. Melville graphically demonstrates, through dramatic incident and the personification of one godship, his thesis that the Typees are a "back-slidden generation."

Another aspect revealed in the study of Melville's use of source material is that his selection of material is often determined by his desire to portray a predominantly romantic, ideal picture of island life.

While it is true that all the sources reflect a fascination with the lushness of tropical scenery and the physical beauty of the people, Melville more consistently emphasizes the idyllic quality of Polynesian life. Choosing among his sources for appropriate incidents and often showing a more involved delight in the natural beauty of his environment, Melville fulfills the most romantic expectations of any reader. The first example of this in Typee is the arrival of the Dolly at Nukahiva. Melville chooses Langsdorff's account of the same event and adapts it to suit his purposes.

Langsdorff:

> At first we could only see a shoal of black-haired heads just above the water; but in a short time we had the very extraordinary spectacle presented us of some hundred men, women, girls, and boys, all swimming about the ship, having in their hands cocoa-nuts, bread-fruit, and bananas, which they had brought to sell.
>
> The cries, the laughter, the romping of these mirthful people, was indescribable, and made a very novel impression upon us. Only a few, . . . were invited on board, the rest swam and played about like a troop of Tritons. The never-ceasing noise they made far exceeded any that I had ever heard at our most numerously attended fairs; and we could scarcely, when we were at dinner, hear each other speak. The young girls and women were not more clothed than the men, and were collected even in greater numbers; they were above all loud and noisy, and, according to our European ideas, immodest. They burst into a loud laugh at the most trifling things; and as we did not understand a word of the many comic effusions addressed to us, their oratory was illustrated with pantomimic gestures, by which we were sufficiently given to understand that they were making us the most liberal and unreserved offers of their charms. . . .
>
> . . . . Suffice it, that the beauties of the island were so extremely importunate to be permitted to come on board, and urged their importunities with so much noise, that, merely for the sake of getting rid of them, and being left quiet awhile, we were obliged to grant some of them free access to the ship.
>
> These graces appeared in general with all their charms exposed; for though they never left the land without at least so much clothing as a large green leaf, yet this light covering was generally lost by swimming any length of way. By a few only were the leafy aprons preserved, and luckily for them we had no sheep or goats on board; since they might, perhaps, have been no less eager to feast upon them, than we were to feast upon the bananas, cocoa-nuts, and bread-fruit, which the lovely creatures brought in their hands. . . .

But however prodigal of their favours, and however ready to follow any sailor that held out a hand to them, the fair sex were not without a certain degree of modesty. They seemed to be considerably distressed when they had lost their aprons, and crept about with their hands in the position of the Medicean Venus, in attitudes which presented a beautiful spectacle to the philosophic observer. . . .

We were not, however, allowed a long time to make philosophical observations upon our new Venuses; for one after another they vanished, hand-in-hand with the sailors, to the interior of the ship, while the goddess of night threw her dark veil over the mysteries that were celebrated.[20]

Stewart's brief account may also have given him some ideas:

. . . two or three canoes were seen paddling towards us from the fishing grounds near the sea, and others from the centre of the bay; and we had scarce let go our anchor, before scores of both sexes came swimming in all directions from the shore, soon surrounding the ship, sporting and blowing like so many porpoises.[21]

Melville:

As we slowly advanced up the bay, numerous canoes pushed off from the surrounding shores, and we were soon in the midst of quite a flotilla of them, their savage occupants struggling to get aboard of us, and jostling one another in their ineffectual attempts. . . . Such strange outcries and passionate gesticulations I never certainly heard or saw before. You would have thought the islanders were on the point of flying at one another's throats, whereas they were only amicably engaged in disentangling their boats.

Scattered here and there among the canoes might be seen numbers of cocoa nuts . . . . one mass far in advance of the rest attracted my attention. In its centre was something I could take for nothing else than a cocoa nut, but which I certainly considered one of the most extraordinary specimens of the fruit I had ever seen. . . . I became aware that what I had supposed to have been one of the fruit was nothing else than the head of an islander, who had adopted this singular method of bringing his produce to market. . . .

. . . . . .

We had approached within a mile and a half perhaps of the foot of the bay, when some of the islanders, who by this time had managed to scramble aboard of us . . . directed our attention to a singular commotion in the water ahead of the vessel. At first I imagined it to be produced by a shoal of fish sporting on the surface, but our savage friends assured us that it was caused by a shoal of "whihenies" (young girls), who in this manner were coming off from the shore to welcome us. As they drew nearer, and I watched the rising and sinking of their forms, and beheld the uplifted right arm bearing above the water the girdle of tappa,

and their long dark hair trailing beside them as they swam, I almost fancied they could be nothing else than so many mermaids:--and very like mermaids they behaved too.

. . . All of them at length succeeded in getting up the ship's side, where they clung dripping with brine and glowing from the bath, their jet-black tresses streaming over their shoulders, and half enveloping their otherwise naked forms. There they hung, sparkling with savage vivacity, laughing gaily at one another, and chattering away with infinite glee. Nor were they idle the while, for each one performed the simple offices of the toilette for the other. . . . What a sight for us bachelor sailors! how avoid so dire a temptation? For who could think of tumbling these artless creatures overboard, when they had swam miles to welcome us?

Their appearance perfectly amazed me; their extreme youth, the light clear brown of their complexions, their delicate features, and inexpressibly graceful figures, their softly moulded limbs, and free unstudied action, seemed as strange as beautiful.

. . . . . .

Our ship was now wholly given up to every species of riot and debauchery. Not the feeblest barrier was interposed between the unholy passions of the crew and their unlimited gratification. The grossest licentiousness and the most shameful inebriety prevailed, with occasional and but short-lived interruptions, through the whole period of her stay. Alas for the poor savages when exposed to the influence of these polluting examples! Unsophisticated and confiding, they are easily led into every vice, and humanity weeps over the ruin thus remorselessly inflicted upon them by their European civilizers. Thrice happy are they who, inhabiting some yet undiscovered island in the midst of the ocean, have never been brought into contaminating contact with the white man. (13-15)

The basic difference in Melville's and Langsdorff's accounts is in the tone which each employs. Melville's detailed picture does far more than Langsdorff's rather stilted version to convey the "warmth of reality."[22] Langsdorff seems more concerned to display his objective, distanced, even critical attitude towards the scantily clad island beauties. He firmly establishes his own moral position through prose which is coldly formal--"Suffice it, that the beauties of the island were so extremely importunate to be permitted to come on board. . . ." Langsdorff also emphasizes the seductive behaviour of the girls, so that they are held responsible for the actions of the sailors. When Langsdorff

lets himself relax a little, he admits that the girls present a very pleasing, even charming spectacle--but he objectifies his response by making his observer a third person philosopher. On the other hand, the details of the toilette and the description of the complexion and figure of the "whihenies" in Melville's passage stress the artless innocence of the native girls; it is the sailors who take advantage of the soft, confiding nature of the maidens--they and not the girls are the "polluting examples."

Langsdorff, rather irritably, finds the noise of the shoals of swimmers both bothersome and immodest. Only after he has expressed the annoying qualities of the islanders does he go on to admire the beauty and charm of the island Venuses. Melville finds nothing irritating in the noise which envelops the Dolly on its arrival. The behaviour of the girls is vivacious and graceful. Tommo is obviously moved by the sensuousness of the girls, and he is not afraid to show his response--"Their appearance perfectly amazed me." Tommo does not pretend to be a philosopher at a time when his reader is hardly expected to think in abstract terms.

In other places in Typee, Melville omits certain references which he could have included from sources apparently because such information would mar the romantic perfection of the scenes he describes. For instance, when Melville discovers the effigy of the dead warrior in the canoe, or visits the burial places where offerings of fruit and meat are displayed, he dwells on the majesty and strangeness of the scene. Other ethnographers such as Porter acknowledge the grandeur and symbolic significance of the ritual offerings, but they also comment on the more disagreeable aspects of such customs. In Porter's description of a burial

canoe containing a dead priest in effigy, he says:

One of the canoes was more splendid than the others, and was situated nearer the grove. I enquired who the dignified personage might be who was seated in her stern, and was informed that this was the priest who had been killed, not long since by the Happahs. The stench here was intolerable from the number of offerings which had been made, but, attracted by curiosity, I went to examine the canoes more minutely, and found the bodies of the Typees, whom we had killed, in a bloated state lying in the bottom of that of the priest, and many other human carcases, with the flesh still on them, lying about the canoe. . . . I asked them why they put the bodies of the dead Typees in that of the priest; they told me (as Wilson interpreted) that they were going to heaven, and that it was impossible to get there without canoes. . . . I endeavoured to ascertain whether they had an idea of a future state, rewards and punishments, and the nature of their heaven. As respects the latter article, they believed it to be an island, somewhere in the sky, abounding with everything desirable; that those killed in war and carried off by their friends go there, provided they are furnished with a canoe and provisions, but that those who are carried off by the enemy, never reach it unless a sufficient number of the enemy can be obtained to paddle his canoe there, and for this reason they were so anxious to procure a crew for their priest, who was killed and carried off by the Happahs. They have neither rewards nor punishments in this world, and I could not learn that they expected any in the next.[23]

The presence of dead warriors in the canoe containing an effigy is not even mentioned by Melville in his account which seems to be drawn directly from Porter's. Instead, as Anderson notes in citing the parallel passages, Melville chooses to "apostrophize the departed warrior with sentimental eloquence," covering up the "stench of human sacrifices--the procuring of victims for which brought about their internecine feuds."[24]

On all sides as you approached this silent spot you caught sight of the dead chief's effigy, seated in the stern of a canoe, which was raised on a light frame a few inches above the level of the pi-pi. . . . The long leaves of the palmetto drooped over the eaves, and through them you saw the warrior holding his paddle with both hands in the act of rowing, leaning forward and inclining his head, as if eager to hurry on his voyage. Glaring at him for ever, and face to face, was a polished human skull, which crowned the prow of the canoe. The spectral figure-head, reversed in its position, glancing backwards, seemed to mock the impatient attitude of the warrior.

When I first visited this singular place with Kory-Kory, he told me --or at least I so understood him--that the chief was paddling his way to the realms of bliss, and bread-fruit--the Polynesian heaven--where every

> moment the bread-fruit trees dropped their ripened spheres to the ground, and where there was no end to the cocoa-nuts and bananas: there they reposed through the livelong eternity upon mats much finer than those of Typee; and every day bathed their glowing limbs in rivers of cocoa-nut oil. In that happy land there were plenty of plumes and feathers. . . ; and, best of all, women far lovelier than the daughters of earth were there in abundance. 'A very pleasant place,' Kory-Kory said it was; 'but after all, not much pleasanter, he thought, than Typee.' (172-173)

Melville's account not only presents a picture which is more aesthetically satisfying than Porter's actuality, it also avoids the anticlimax in Porter's passage. Having given an interesting picture of the practice of offering company for the priest's journey, Porter gives a very vague summation of the Polynesian heaven, saying only that it abounds with "everything desirable." Melville leaves us in no doubt about the pleasures of such a place; Kory-Kory tells us all about it. Some humour is generated at Kory-Kory's expense, for his heaven is a sort of larger than life Typee where everything is bigger and better. Melville's comic conjunction--"realms of bliss and bread-fruit"--also indicates that the reader should not take this passage altogether seriously.

From the first descriptions of the natives, to later detailed accounts of their daily lives once Tommo is in Typee, Melville presents island life as an idyll in which man neither labours nor wants. Unlike such pious visitors as Stewart and Ellis, Tommo's ethnography selectively depicts only the simplicity and naturalness of the natives. Even commentators like Langsdorff and Porter, who are struck by the beauty of the men and women, at times are shocked at the apparent licentiousness of island morality. Other less serious but unromantic features, such as the tattooing of women, are discussed by these same writers as part of their cultural observations. By contrast, in order to present a consistently ideal picture, Melville is forced to misrepresent certain areas of

established ethnography. Anderson discovers that Melville is intentionally inaccurate in one of his comments concerning women's tattoos. Fayaway has very discreet and ladylike tattoos; she is marked only on the lips and shoulder, so that the effect is charming rather than dreadful. Her exotic beauty is enhanced by these slight decorative touches. However, Anderson's evidence, taken from W. C. Handy's thorough study, Tattooing in the Marquesas (1922), proves that all women were tattooed, regardless of rank. Melville gives a more accurate account in his anecdote involving the wife of King Moana in which he mentions that her "bare legs, are embellished with spiral tattooing, . . . somewhat resembling two miniature Trajan's columns" (8). But by the time he comes to describe Fayaway's markings, he has painted such a picture of his favorite's natural beauty that he cannot admit that designs were included on "the lips, the lobes of the ears, the curve of the shoulder, both hands, both feet, and the entire expanse of the legs; and apparently there were no distinguishing marks to symbolize either marriage or rank."[25]

In a like manner, Melville sustains the notion of idyllic perfection by choosing only such ethnographic material as will corroborate his representation's bias in favour of the primitive simplicity of native life; no one need work or think of the future in the Happy Valley where Nature takes care of her own:

> Nature has planted the bread-fruit tree and the banana and in her own good time she brings them to maturity, when the idle savage stretches forth his hand, and satisfies his appetite. (195)

Langsdorff states: "The riches of the southern climate, where, almost without the intervention of man, nature brings forth fruits and other things necessary to his sustenance, where he is free from all solicitude

to procure a warm dwelling. . . ."[26] Melville's prose, less inflated than Langsdorff's, presents the same picture of the ease of Polynesian life. In fact, he goes one step further than Langsdorff and omits the qualification, "almost without the intervention of man." He apparently chooses this account rather than Porter's or Stewart's because they both discuss evidence of artistic and agricultural advancements among the natives. Stewart says:

> . . . we were astonished at the many evidences of art and civilization discoverable. In many places, the street running up the glen, through which a broad stream pours its water to the sea, is as wide and neat in its whole appearance as that of a flourishing village in our own country. . . .[27]

While Stewart observes that there are few signs of cultivation, he does add that

> In a walk of more than a mile, we saw one or two small enclosures only, containing clusters of the cloth plant or paper mulberry, sugar-cane, and roots of the dracoena terminalis, and a few tobacco plants. These, however, appeared well-kept; and the fences surrounding them very neatly constructed of bamboo. . . .[28]

Melville includes no evidence of civilized skills in Typee.

The descriptions of the natives themselves add further substance to Tommo's rapture. It is hardly ever necessary for Melville to alter previous travellers' impressions of the delightful beauty of both sexes. Both Stewart and Ellis have comments which Melville could turn to for both phrasing and attitude.

Stewart:

> In complexion many of them were very fair scarcely, if any, darker than a clear brunette; admitting even, in some cases, of a distinct mantling of colour in the cheek and lips; while in figure they were small and delicately formed, with arms and hands that would bear comparison with any in the drawing-rooms of the most polished noblesse.[29]

Ellis' account may have been the source for the details Melville used in his description of Fayaway. Ellis comments that

> . . . not withstanding the dark tint with which the climate appears to dye their skin, the ruddy bloom of health and vigour, or the sudden blush, is often seen mantling the youthful countenance under the light brown tinge, which like a thin veil, but partially conceals its glowing hue.[30]

Melville describes Fayaway in the same terms:

> Her free and pliant figure was the very perfection of female grace and beauty. Her complexion was a rich and mantling olive, and when watching the glow upon her cheeks, I could almost swear that beneath the transparent medium there lurked the blushes of faint vermilion. (85)

Melville's account differs from his sources in that he brings his own reactions into his passage. "I could almost swear," and other exclamations of delight occur frequently in Typee; his sources usually express such emotions in more detached terms, using the second person or citing the testimony of others. Melville also uses his descriptions to characterize a particular female; his sources only describe girls in general, which, needless to say, also allows them to maintain a more objective attitude. Melville seems to realize that his description must apply to others if Typee is to be a useful travel account. So, after eulogizing his favorite, he continues, "Though in my eyes, at least, Fayaway was indisputably the loveliest female I saw in Typee, yet the description I have given of her will in some measure apply to nearly all the youthful portion of her sex in the valley" (87). As an ethnographer, Melville's individualizations are slightly inappropriate for he should be more concerned with the typical than with the eccentric. Another example of this unorthodox practice is found in his choice of Tinor and Marheyo as an example of a mature couple. Both persons have eccentricities which

make them colourful characters, but poor ethnographic examples. Tinor is presented as "the only industrious person in the valley of Typee"; Marheyo's odd behaviour is frequently commented on. However, the description of their particular house and its furnishings has a larger reference, for it applies "also to nearly all the other dwelling-places in the vale, and will furnish some idea of the generality of the natives" (81).

One important omission can be detected in Typee from the common areas covered by Melville and his sources: Melville's book fails to give any real consideration to the place and practice of religion among the natives. A great deal of material was available on this subject, for generally the travel books contain major sections on observations of the hierarchy of priests and their role in native life. Stewart and Ellis, as missionaries, are both very interested in the system of idolatry. Both emphasize the barbarity of the heathen's religion, and the tyranny exerted by the high priests. Stewart describes the order of priests and chiefs, discusses the practice of offering human sacrifices, and concludes that the evils of heathen worship destroy the happiness of an otherwise tranquil society.

> The devices of darkness which constitute their religious creed, and the cruelty of practice which it inculcates and approves, cause them literally to spend their lives in a bondage of fear; while an utter ignorance of the true principles of moral good and evil betrays them into unbounded licentiousness and almost every sin.[31]

Stewart comes to this conclusion on the basis of "undisguised facts" which he uncovered in his study of religious observances. In spite of the fact that Langsdorff is often impressed by the luxury and ease of life in the South Seas, he too discovers that the taboo, as a part of the religious structure, plays a major role in defining the laws for native behaviour.

Langsdorff lists twenty major taboos, concluding that on Nukahiva prejudice and superstition "serve as the foundation of all institutions, law and religion."[32] "Every islander regulates himself in his behaviour according to prejudices and customs, and his passions are kept in check through deeply-rooted superstition. . . ."[33]

From his position as a proponent of the benefits of savagery as opposed to civilization, Melville is forced to understate the role of religion, however important such information is for the anthropologist. Melville depicts the natives as just and noble (201) and minimizes the effect of the taboo. On almost every occasion when Tommo is forced to consider the evidence of religion, he reacts with a humour which mocks the seriousness one usually encounters in a treatment of the subject. Only incidents like those of Kory-Kory and the idol are elaborated; none of the stories of the capture and immolation of people for sacrifices are mentioned. Tommo delights in the fact that the natives never give a thought to tomorrow--religion is not taken seriously. Melville fastens on Porter's assertion that "In religion these people are mere children; their morais are their baby-houses, and their gods are their dolls."[34] After witnessing Kolory's treatment of Moa Artua, Tommo dismisses the event by saying, "The whole of these proceedings were like those of a parcel of children playing with dolls and baby houses" (176). Presented in this light, the religion of the Typees can be dismissed with a laugh--there is certainly no reason to fear. Melville calls the accounts of travellers like Stewart "humbuggery"; he discredits their sources of information, calling their informants old yarn-spinning scoundrels. On the basis of the evidence he has presented, Melville writes:

> For my own part, I am free to confess my almost entire inability to gratify any curiosity that may be felt with regard to the theology of the valley. I doubt whether the inhabitants themselves could do so. They are either too lazy or too sensible to worry themselves about abstract points of religious belief. While I was among them they never held any synods or councils to settle the principles of faith by agitating them. An unbounded liberty of conscience seemed to prevail. Those who pleased to do so were allowed to repose implicit faith in an ill-favored god with a large bottle nose and fat shapeless arms crossed upon his breast; whilst others worshipped an image which, having no likeness either in heaven or on earth, could hardly be called an idol. As the islanders always maintained a discreet reserve, with regard to my own peculiar views on religion, I thought it excessively ill-bred in me to pry into theirs. (171)

Melville's refusal to consider the religious rites of the natives in a serious manner may stem from a conviction that the missionaries were overly biased in their accounts. But it seems more likely that Melville wanted to strengthen his point that the natives were happier and more innocent in the natural state.

Yet, at the same time, there is another aspect of savage life which Melville does not omit, even though it contradicts many of his claims in favour of the noble savage. The fear of cannibalism which begins and ends the story is also supported by ethnographic evidence. When he wants to promote suspense, Melville selects matter from the travel books which presents a darker picture of native customs. Langsdorff's work is useful for this purpose, for he often stresses the dangers of cannibalism. Langsdorff states that "it is a well-established fact, that the people of Nukahiwa eat their friends if pressed by hunger, and their enemies from hatred or custom."[35] He attributes the cause of wars among the tribes to the need for procuring human flesh. Melville also seems to have followed Stewart's example in his statements on the ferocity of the Typees:

Stewart:

. . . their tribe and the Taipiis were, as usual at war. . . . Their grimaces of detestation and deadly hatred to their enemies, as they pointed to their habitations and valley, and pantomimic representations of the battle, the discharge of the muskets, and effect of the shot, were quite amusing; while they used all the eloquence of speech and gesture to induce us to espouse their cause, and pour destruction on the poor Taipiis, whose very name seemed to be a watch word of terror among them.

. . . the country and habitations of the Tapiis, the race so much the subject of talk among the rest of the people, and apparently so greatly the object of their dread.[36]

Melville:

These celebrated warriors appear to inspire the other islanders with unspeakable terrors. Their very name is a frightful one; for the word 'Typee' in the Marquesan dialect signifies a lover of human flesh. It is rather singular that the title should have been bestowed upon them exclusively, inasmuch as the natives of all this group are irreclaimable cannibals. The name may, perhaps, have been given to denote the peculiar ferocity of this clan, and to convey a special stigma along with it.

These same Typees enjoy a prodigious notoriety all over the islands. The natives of Nukuheva would frequently recount in pantomime to our ship's company their terrible feats, and would show the marks of wounds they had received in desperate encounters with them. When ashore they would try to frighten us by pointing to one of their own number, and calling him a Typee, manifesting no little surprise that we did not take to our heels at so terrible an announcement. It was quite amusing, too, to see with what earnestness they disclaimed all cannibal propensities on their own part, while they denounced their enemies--the Typees--as inveterate gormandizers of human flesh. . . . (24-25)

Melville betters Stewart's account by turning his statement that the Typees' "name seemed to be a watch word of terror" into a definite explanation of the reason why--Typee means man-eater. Melville is often willing to supply such details as are needed to add colour to the account. Charles Anderson reveals that this explanation by Melville is false[37] and also cites another case in which Melville manufactures a piece of ethnography in the interest of suspense. Tommo says that he discovers that one of the packages suspended from the roof of the hut contains the mummified head of a white man whom he fears was Toby. However, Anderson reveals

that "the Marquesans were not head hunters in any sense of the word: the skulls and bones which they kept as relics were merely part of their ancestral cult."[38]

In the passages which are intended to create an early fear of the Typees, Melville's major changes in the source material amount to embellishments and exaggerations. In spite of the fact that Melville could have tempered the reader's fear by relating the doubts which Porter and Stewart have about the reputation of the isolated tribe, at this point he chooses to ignore Porter's evidence which "greatly staggered" the explorer's belief "of their being cannibals."[39] It is not in the interest of suspense to voice Stewart's qualifying thoughts:

> Every new observation of the character of this wild race persuades me, more and more fully, that the fierce and vindictive deportment, reported of them in some instances towards foreigners, is attributable . . . to the ill-treatment and wrong suffered by them from previous visitors, and often is a direct consequence of the imprudent measures and violent usage of the very persons who publish their ferocity to the world.[40]

I have so far shown that Melville uses ethnographic information to support a romantic portrayal of native life; his contrary use of ethnographic detail as a means of arousing suspense has also been briefly touched upon. The changes which he makes in his presentation of material include a personalization of facts so that actual details are incorporated into amusing anecdotes or characterizations; an added humour and lightness which result from a less formal and official style; an exclusion of unromantic details and events; and a sharpening of exposition brought about by the exclusion of details which are superfluous for a vivid picture of native life. What must also be mentioned are the ethnographic borrowings which contribute little to either romantic or suspense themes --the ethnography which relates facts drawn from sources with few changes

in style or substance because the exposition is essentially neutral. Such barely altered exposition gives a more realistic picture of the many details of Polynesian life, but does not have a significant effect on either romance or suspense. This characterizes the nature of the bulk of factual information in Typee, which includes descriptions of houses, tappa making, the system of polyandry, the wildlife of the vale, musical instruments and the process of lightening the skin. The tone of such accounts is scientific and impersonal; the language is formal; the reports bear little relation to the speaker who assumes the objective voice. The following account of the dying process, first Stewart's and then Melville's, shows how closely Melville followed his source:

Stewart:

> Many of these present were exceedingly beautiful; the impression of features has more of an European mould, than most uncivilized people I have seen. In complexion many of them are very fair, scarcely, if any, darker than a clear brunette; admitting even, in some cases, of a distinct mantling of colour in the cheek and lips. . . .
>
> The general lighter complexion observable in this company, in comparison with most met upon the beach at Taiohae, is attributable to the greater moisture of the atmosphere in the mountains, and to the deep shades in which most of their habitations are situated. But the uncommon fairness of many of the females is a result of an artificial process, followed by an almost entire seclusion from the sun. The juice of a small indigenous vine called papa possesses the quality of whitening the skin; and such as are peculiarly desirous of fair complexions, wash themselves every morning in a preparation of this, and wrapping themselves closely in their garments, keep within doors much of the day. When they do go out, they always make use of the large and spreading leaf of the palmetto for an umbrella. They usually bathe in the evening.
>
> On the approach of a festival, the arrival of a ship, or any occasion of public interest, they plunge into the stream, and, washing off the greenish hues of the papa, annoint themselves with cocoa-nut oil, and put on their best apparel.[41]

Melville:

> Not so easy, however, is it to assign an adequate cause for the endless variety of complexions to be seen in the Typee Valley. During the festival, I had noticed several young females whose skins were almost as

white as any Saxon damsel's; a slight dash of the mantling brown being all that marked the difference. This comparative fairness of complexion, though in a great degree perfectly natural, is partly the result of an artificial process, and of an entire exclusion from the sun. The juice of the "papa" root, found in great abundance at the head of the valley, is held in great esteem as a cosmetic, with which many of the females daily anoint their whole person. The habitual use of it whitens and beautifies the skin. Those of the young girls who resort to this method of heightening their charms, never expose themselves to the rays of the sun; an observance, however, that produces little or no inconvenience, since there are but few of the inhabited portions of the vale which are not shaded over with a spreading canopy of boughs, so that one may journey from house to house, scarcely deviating from the direct course, and yet never once see his shadow cast upon the ground.

The "papa," when used, is suffered to remain upon the skin for several hours; being of light green color, it consequently imparts for the time a similar hue to the complexion. Nothing, therefore, can be imagined more singular than the appearance of these nearly naked damsels immediately after the application of the cosmetic. (182)

Passages like this cause Melville's narrative to shift from a personalized tale towards an impersonal, scientific treatise. The humour disappears; literary and artistic allusions vanish in the prose of the objective observer. If one quoted all the passages written as this one is, Typee would be taken for a fairly dry treatise on the customs of Polynesians. Of course, there is more than this in Melville's first book; Typee is not the usual travelogue. But several problems arise as a result of the mingling of artistic writing with straight, scientific exposition. The question of why Melville chose the form of a travel book which forced such mixed effects leads to a consideration of the effect of source material upon the fictional elements of Typee. This chapter has considered Melville's constructive use of source material; the next will deal with the cumulative effect of ethnography upon the elements of romance, adventure and suspense in Typee.

CHAPTER III

THE IMPACT OF ETHNOGRAPHIC FORMS AND PROCEDURES ON THE ADVENTURE-SUSPENSE ASPECTS OF TYPEE

On returning home in 1844 from his voyages in the South Seas, the young Herman Melville was faced with the same problem which had occasioned his departure for parts unknown three years earlier. The problem was the difficulty in finding a suitable land occupation. Melville's experience as a sailor on the whale ships Acushnet and Lucy Ann and the man-of-war United States[1] gave him few skills which were practicably marketable away from the sea. Before voyaging he had variously tried teaching, clerking, and bookkeeping; none of these occupations beckoned any more enticingly now than they had then.[2] However, Melville had had exciting experiences in an exotic and remote part of the globe. He had also discovered that he possessed ability as a storyteller, enhanced by the sailors' fondness for "spinning yarns" in order to "relieve the weariness of many a night-watch at sea" (xiii). This experience and ability took on some importance for a young man searching for a profession at a time when travel literature was extremely popular.[3] With little to lose, and with at least one very strange story to tell, Melville set out to become a professional storyteller. He chose the strangest and thus the most saleable of his adventures in the Pacific for his first book. Melville hoped to produce a popular work; he was counting on his audience's curious interest in what was then a relatively unexplored region.[4] Certainly the pastoral setting of the isolated Typee vale had not been exploited by any marked literary talent. Hoping to profit

materially from his first literary adventure, he therefore capitalized on his readers' romantic expectations. So Tommo says--a broad appeal to the reader--on approaching the Marquesas that his thoughts turn to

> Naked houris--cannibal banquets--groves of cocoa-nut--coral reefs--tatooed chiefs--and bamboo temples; sunny valleys planted with bread-fruit-trees--carved canoes dancing on the flashing blue waters--savage woodlands guarded by horrible idols--heathenish rites and human sacrifices. (5)

Given that Melville had really no formal experience as a writer,[5] the choice of travelogue as a form for his narrative was a natural one. One need only look at the preface of most travel books of the period to find an easy apology from the author for his deficiencies as a stylist stemming from his lack of expertise in the art of book writing.[6] The writers of South Seas' travel books were generally sailors or missionaries or merchants whose concerns were less with finished style than with providing useful or interesting information in their various accounts of newly visited places.

The stated concerns of some of the writers with whom Melville was acquainted[7] reveal a general conception about the nature and compass of travel books. The preface of William Ellis' extremely thorough study of Polynesian cultures, Polynesian Researches (1831), indicates his concern to give an "authentic record of these [cultural facts]";[8] Rev. Charles Stewart intends his work, A Visit to the South Seas (1832), to have a "valuable tendency upon the minds and the hearts of those arrived to years of maturity."[9] But it is G. H. Von Langsdorff in Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World (1821) who gives the clearest definition of the responsibility which voyagers have in recording their experiences:

> A strict adherence to truth ought not to be merely a matter of preference; it ought to be considered a sacred duty by every traveller who undertakes to give the history of his adventures to the world. Nor has he any occasion to have recourse to poetical flourishes, or the details of marvels, embellished by a lively imagination, to render his work interesting; he is daily presented with so many things really remarkable, and highly worthy of attention, that his only difficulty is to restrain himself so far in relating mere facts, that his work may not exceed all reasonable bounds.[10]

Whatever the ironies of this statement are in view of Langsdorff's practice of romantic embellishment in his own book, this concern for truth or "mere fact" was certainly central in the mind of Melville's first English publisher, John Murray. Facts were what Murray promised the reader of his Home and Colonial Library Series.[11] As John Murray wrote to Gansevoort Melville, he was interested in publishing Typee, but he was worried about the authenticity of a narrative which appeared to be the creation of "a practised writer."[12] Besides Murray's fear that the facts of Typee might be unreliable, another concern is mentioned by Leon Howard in his useful historical note to the Northwestern-Newberry edition of Typee. Murray felt, as did later British critics, that the style of the book was too literary for a common sailor.[13] As George Paston records, "Murray, a connoisseur in this class of work [travel literature], was attracted by the dramatic interest of the narrative and the raciness of the style, but he scented the forbidden thing--the taint of fiction."[14] Murray's refusal to publish fiction was the result of both personal taste and an understanding of the taste of the time. Strange fact, but fact nonetheless, was a more marketable commodity than romantic fiction; as J. A. Ward observes in passing:

> The heavily detailed descriptions of the processes of tappa-weaving and bread-fruit preparation in Typee . . . proved interesting as ends in themselves to a mid-nineteenth century public with a stronger relish for the remote and exotic than for technical excellence in fiction.[15]

Because Melville's first book was cast in the mould of a travelogue, he had to vouch for its veracity[16] to both his publisher and his public. He guaranteed that his polemical passages were "based upon facts admitting of no contradiction"; his whole criticism of missionary activity was based upon the avowed reliability of his observations. One way to prove this was to include a large amount of ethnographic material which would satisfy the conventional demands of credibility. The public's expectations necessitated the adoption of the formula for genuine travel accounts established by Captain Cook's scientific records: detailed information on the geographical location, diet, dress, and social customs of the native people. Pressed by economic necessity, Melville thus responded to these expectations. He admits in a letter to John Murray that the "book is certainly calculated for popular reading, or for none at all."[17] By expanding the time period in Typee from his actual four-week stay to a leisurely four months, he found the means for permitting a proper balance of exposition with narrative;[18] the travel books of his predecessors in Polynesia solved the problem of the exposition itself. Melville's borrowed interpolations undoubtedly helped the book in becoming a popular success, as H. S. Salt confirmed the year after Melville's death--"Coming at a time when men's minds were filled with a vague, undefined interest in the wonders of the Pacific . . . it gained an instantaneous and widespread success."[19]

Travel literature appealed to readers for two main reasons. First of all there was an apparently insatiable curiosity among a relatively settled and staid reading public about lands and peoples which were far-off and unknown. As Melville himself said in a lecture on travel, given in 1859, such readers' "first landing should be on a fine

day, in a tropical climate with palm trees and gaily dressed natives in view,"[20] presenting a perfect, postcard vision of idyllic nature. At the same time, the same readers, conditioned by a whole host of utilitarian concerns, wanted to be given concrete information accurately reflecting the real way of life in Polynesia; this kind of interest was scientific and particular. The writer of travel books was thus caught in a contradiction between these two aims--for in his effort to inform or enlighten, he was in danger of dispelling the aura of romance by making the facts of Polynesian life mundane. By treating such ordinary subjects as the preparation of food and the building of houses, he ran the risk of losing the reader who was at least initially stimulated by a more vague, imprecise feeling for the exotic. Yet travel literature tended always to impart "solid, precise, useful information."[21] As Melville said in a letter to John Murray, after he had published Typee and Omoo, the requirements in writing a "narrative of facts" included the necessity of "plodding along with dull common places" which "cramped & fettered" the romantic designs of the writer.[22] Melville's statement recognizes that, finally, "travel literature purports to offer things as they are--the real, the attainable --and in doing so it is an expression of empiricism at odds with the true romantic spirit. [It makes] . . . its strongest appeal to readers of a practical turn of mind."[23]

That its appeal was of a primarily practical nature becomes clear on reading Melville's sources. In these works, the writers are concerned to give the fullest, most detailed descriptions of native cultures primarily in the interests of science, certainly not for the sheer sake of romance. The diffuseness of the approach, along with a reportorial, impersonal style, inevitably turn exotic vagueness into

empirical certainty. Even a writer like Stewart, who is often aware of the picturesque charm of the scenes he witnesses, shows a marked reluctance in using affective language to describe exciting events like dances and feasts; he has no wish to cast an aura of mystery or romance around the religious ceremonies of the natives. In spite of opportunities for delighting or startling their readers, both Stewart and Ellis stick to a straight account of the facts. Langsdorff differs somewhat from the norm as he tends to take more interest in relating stories of bloody events which he has heard secondhand. But even Langsdorff has an explanation for every native custom described. The mystery which surrounded the primitive tribes is gradually replaced by facts which allow the writer and his audience to respond to Polynesia in their own civilized terms.

The tension that exists in the empirical treatment of material which has romantic appeal is overcome in Melville's sources by adopting methods and procedures which stifle the romance. Reading the records which Melville drew on, one cannot fail to notice the insistent particularity of the travel writers who seem to be always straining after a sort of compulsive certainty. The language is starchy; it is seldom allusive or figurative as it intends to be not connotative but denotative. The fear of an intrusion of personality, which would mar the precision or objectivity of the observations, is evident in such a style. But, nonetheless, obvious prejudice against the natives, shock at their nakedness, and condemnation of their morality, appear often enough in the accounts of both missionaries and explorers to cast doubt on the depth of their impartiality. For instance, a statement by Ellis appears to show little bias when first considered in isolation: "Freed to a great degree, so far as the means of subsistence were concerned, from anxiety and labour,

the islanders were greatly devoted to amusement, for which heiva was the general name. . . ."[24] This leads to evaluative statements, loaded with pejorative words. Ellis' attitude to the people who are "addicted to pleasure" is a Calvinistic one; the fact that they do not acknowledge God as the source of their plenty is a condemnation in itself--Ellis' point of view means that he can only see them as indolent and coarse "rude untutored children of nature."[25] Stewart also reveals that his attitude is firmly established even before he meets the Nukahivans. In spite of the attractiveness of much of what he sees, the existence of idolatry on Nukahiva convinces him that "the ignorance, degradation, and thousand miseries which long personal observation have taught me to believe inseparable from such a condition"[26] are operative there. Coming as a representative of the one true Saviour, Stewart assumes that the natives regard the arrival of his ship as a promise of peace, seeing the superior moral and spiritual state of the white men as a "vision from a better world."[27]

Whether the individual writer sees sin or romance in the natives' way of life, the methods of description of the facts themselves are similar in the travel sources. The pedantic concern of the writer is always in evidence; the most common method of procedure is to pile detail upon detail, using as little personal narrative as is necessary to connect incidents. These writers were conscious of their duty as natural historians and anthropologists in a time when there was little standard methodology. On arriving at the Marquesas, Stewart spends two full pages describing the bay of Taiohae, after having given several pages of general description of the physical nature of rocky, steep South Sea islands. Ellis' concern for accuracy causes him to give equal and lengthy coverage

to vegetation, housing, marriage customs and social habits. Chapter two of his first volume, twenty-nine pages in length, lists the descriptions, latin names and growing rates of the trees in the islands. As a recorder, his emphasis is, naturally enough, always upon completeness rather than selectivity. Similarly, Langsdorff, motivated by the desire to give an exact and graphic record, painstakingly gives the physical proportions, down to last millimetre, of one Mufau Taputakava, who was an example of the representative physical form to be found among the Nukahivans.[28]

The result of this preoccupation with providing a precisely detailed record is that the accounts read as compendious treatises which have no central or connecting points, save for the personality or bias of the writer which begins to emerge only from scattered critical comments. The tediousness which results is almost inevitable, even in a work like Stewart's which is quite poetically descriptive. For when fact is piled upon fact, the unselective nature of the presentation, as well as the doggedly scientific style of the often rambling descriptions, tend to diminish the impression of the strange and wonderful places.

Writers like Stewart, Ellis, Langsdorff and Porter intend their works to be complete and scientific; therefore their accounts cover all aspects of ethnography with the intention of recording matter which will allow the audience to picture and understand the natives. Melville, on the other hand, attempts some resolution of the conflict between romance and particularity. For one thing, he refuses to offer explanations for the practices he observes, even though he draws our attention to the "strangeness" of such customs. At one point he says

> . . . although hardly a day passed while I remained upon the island that I did not witness some religious ceremony or other, it was very much like

seeing a parcel of 'Freemasons' making secret signs to each other; I saw everything but could comprehend nothing. (177)

His refusal to attempt any explanation of tribal procedures allows the reader's imagination more play, particularly after some of the proddings supplied by Melville's emphasis on the "thrice mysterious" reasons for taboos and the general conduct of the Typees. In this way, mystery, and even suspense, are permitted to coexist with ethnographic informativeness; the strangeness of the details which remain unaccounted for actually serve to enhance the exotic picture which Melville intends to portray. Another method Melville employed for preserving the exotic image of the South Seas was discussed in the previous chapter. This involves omitting details which might reduce the estimation of the idyllic laziness of island life. Tommo states that there is no artificial cultivation in the valley; he dwells on the idea that the bread-fruit and cocoanut ripen tended only by the sun and rain. In the interest of a romantic portrayal he minimizes any form of labour, characterizing the natives as those on whom "the penalty of the Fall presses very lightly" (195). He willingly sacrifices strict accuracy for a more pleasing romance in his description of Fayaway's tattoos.

As a writer with creative intentions, Melville sees the trap into which exacting thoroughness will lead a work claiming to be a tale of "stirring adventure" which may appear "strange and romantic," even to sailors who are used to a "life of adventure." Therefore, Melville disparages the attempt to come to certain knowledge about the islanders. Knowing that his book intends to delight as well as instruct--previous travellers felt that instruction was a delight in itself--he must defend his position. His mild criticisms of the genre of travel literature begin

In the preface:

> . . . it will be observed that he chiefly treats of their more obvious peculiarities; and, in describing their customs, refrains in most cases from entering into explanations concerning their origin and purposes. As writers of travels among the barbarous communities are generally very diffuse on these subjects, he deems it right to advert to what may be considered a culpable omission. (xiii)

In chapter twenty-four he makes the point in stronger language as he discredits the validity of the scientific travellers' discoveries:

> Now, when the scientific voyager arrives at home with his collection of wonders, he attempts, perhaps, to give a description of some of the strange people he has been visiting. Instead of representing them as a community of lusty savages, . . . he enters into a very circumstantial and learned narrative of certain unaccountable superstitions and practices, about which he knows as little as the islanders do themselves. Having had little time, and scarcely any opportunity to become acquainted with the customs he pretends to describe, he writes them down one after another in an off-hand, haphazard style. . . . (171)

Melville thus admits that his concern in Typee is not to provide an encyclopedic record of customs and the origins of cultures. The first paragraph of the preface insists that the tale that follows is both strange and exciting, that it is a product of the life of adventure led by the author. Because of "very peculiar circumstances" he at once admits and insists that his account is irregular given the concerns of travel literature. Melville's comments on dates and orthography also reveal his impatience with the meticulous precision of his predecessors.

> In very many published narratives no little degree of attention is bestowed upon dates; but as the author lost all knowledge of the days of the week, during the occurrence of the scenes herein related, he hopes that the reader will charitably pass over his shortcomings in this particular.
>
> In the Polynesian words used in this volume--except in those cases where the spelling has been previously determined by others--that form of orthography has been employed, which might be supposed most easily to convey their sound to a stranger. In several works descriptive of the islands of the Pacific, many of the most beautiful combinations of vocal sounds have been altogether lost to the ear of the reader by an over-attention to the ordinary rules of spelling. (xiv)

He prefers, then, to give a more personal account which will somehow capture the spirit of the islands even if that means the sacrifice of scientific correctness.

Melville's claim for his first work, and his criticisms of the travel genre, point out new aims and methods of procedure for Typee. In spite of Melville's positive assertions, however, it is still necessary to decide what Typee is intended to be, and what it, in fact, becomes. Having considered the travel genre, and Melville's efforts to break out of the strictures of reportorial writing, we can now consider the effect on Typee of the inclusion of the requisite factual detail together with material which belongs most naturally to mystery or adventure writing. For two distinct purposes emerge from the introductory pages of Typee. The first object of the story is clearly to entertain the reader as the sailors on the night-watch at sea were entertained. The second purpose is pedagogic--the reader will become correctly informed about the real state of native life. This is where the problem begins.

Typee exhibits the inevitable conflict between the elements of mystery and adventure and the demands of empirical science. While we have seen that detailed ethnography and romantic themes are not necessarily mutually exclusive, the cumulative effect of ethnography upon the mystery-suspense theme is a more serious matter. For Melville chose to entertain not only by selecting ethnographic material which would emphasize the romantic, but also by adding suspense and a plot to give unity and adventure to a travel book. He wrote Typee apparently without being fully conscious that there are basic, important differences in the narrator's roles and procedures as a suspense-adventure writer and as an ethnographer faithfully recording an objective reality. In trying to do both, Typee

oscillates awkwardly between the extremes of detached exposition and involved action.[29]

In order to generate suspense, an artist may fill his work with tricks and surprises. It is legitimate, in a mystery story, to withhold information in order to create the necessary anticipation;[30] Melville utilizes such devices to arouse a fearful anticipation about the nature of the Typees, luring his readers into uncertainty about the character of Tommo's eventual hosts. For example, in spite of Tommo's delight in his new surroundings which certainly contrast favourably with life on board the Dolly and the hardships of the flight, he continues to fuel readers' fears by reiterating the idea that the "fickle passions which sway the bosom of a savage" (76) may erupt at any time. This idea is kept alive in spite of the fact that the adventurers are now stationary and the natives show every evidence of hospitality.

> But, not withstanding the kind treatment we received, I was too familiar with the fickle disposition of savages not to feel anxious to withdraw from the valley, and put myself beyond the reach of that fearful death which, under all these smiling appearances, might yet menace us. (97)

In a mystery story, suspense works because the reader is involved but not completely informed until the denouement. So in Typee the narrator, and the reader with him, are necessarily perplexed because they are not allowed to have a complete grasp of the situation. As Tommo's vantage point is limited and somewhat obtuse, he never fully understands what he sees. On board ship, he nervously recites the rumours which he has heard about the fierceness of the natives. We are therefore restricted by the limited and personal point of view from which the subjective narrator perceives new situations. But as an ethnographer, Tommo must also inform readers of the customs and habits of the South Sea islanders; in order to be convincing

in his detailing of life in Typee, he must establish himself as a trusted observer exercising at least the appearance of scientific detachment. From this perspective, no detail is superfluous or should be withheld, in the attempt to record as much data as can be collected.

Melville wants to do both things successfully in Typee; but the difficulty of two opposing purposes functioning in harmony becomes clear when one considers the effect Tommo's ethnology has on suspense. In the passages in which there is a comparison of cultures, Tommo always comes out heartily in favour of the advantages of barbarity. We see that the natives are simple, unrestrained and noble. Life is easy; the individual governs his own behaviour; the sun shines on the Happy Valley. Civilization is characterized by the hard life on board the Dolly, by a social hierarchy, by the need to work hard just to eat and keep warm, and by the missionaries who are hypocrites and deceivers. Melville's ethnographic descriptions of life in Typee give him just reason to champion the native and extoll his virtues--but, in the process, suspense is dissipated as the reader comes to know, to like, and to admire such noble, kindly beings.

Further difficulties arise from the fact that suspense and ethnographic writing demand two essentially different styles.[31] Ethnographic and geographic descriptions, as we have seen, are thorough and reportorial. The words reflect what is seen, not the state of mind of the viewer. Bayard Taylor, in his Cyclopedia of Modern Travel (1856), characterizes the method of such an approach:

> Modern exploration is intelligent, and its results are therefore positive and permanent. The traveler no longer wanders bewildered in a cloud of fables, prepared to see marvels, and but too ready to create them; he tests every step of the way by the sure light of science, and his pioneer trail becomes a plain and easy path to those who follow. The pencil, the compass, the barometer, and the sextant accompany him; geology, botany,

and ethnology are his aids; and by these helps and appliances, his single brain now achieves results it would once have required an armed force to win.[32]

By contrast Typee begins with the elements of adventure and suspense which the preface has promised. Tommo is longing for shore, and stories of the romantic islands and fearsome inhabitants arouse an "irresistable curiosity" in him. He is aware of certain information about the romantic isles; the relation of this knowledge follows the first speculative anticipations. These facts heighten Tommo's revery--some are selected to arouse feelings of terror, for Melville dwells on the "dreadful fate" (6) of certain boats' crews. Tommo has heard only dreadful things about the Typees, who are singled out for special mention. These human gourmandizers are said to elicit a "particular and most unqualified repugnance" (25) in Tommo; their very name, according to Melville, signifies a lover of human flesh in the Marquesan dialect (24). On board the Dolly, Tommo gives us only such evidence as would portray the Typees in the worst possible character.

The creation of suspense, which begins on board ship, and which intensifies during Tommo's and Toby's flight, lends itself to melodramatic and gothic descriptions[33] which reflect the agitated state of mind of the observer. An example of this kind of description is found in the following passage. Tommo records his sensations which give the reader a picture of the "hell" he is in, but his report reveals more about his reactions to the environment than about the environment itself:

In a few minutes we reached the foot of the gorge, and kneeling upon a small ledge of dripping rocks, I bent over to the stream. What a delicious sensation was I now to experience! I paused for a second to concentrate all my capabilities of enjoyment, and then immersed my lips in the clear element before me. Had the apples of Sodom turned to ashes in my mouth,

I could not have felt a more startling revulsion. A single drop of the cold fluid seemed to freeze every drop of blood in my body; the fever that had been burning in my veins gave place on the instant to death-like chills, which shook me one after another like so many shocks of electricity, while the perspiration produced by my late violent exertions congealed in icy beads upon my forehead. My thirst was gone, and I fairly loathed the water. Starting to my feet, the sight of those dank rocks, oozing forth moisture at every crevice, and the dark stream shooting along its dismal channel, sent fresh chills through my shivering frame, and I felt as uncontrollable a desire to climb up towards the genial sunlight as I before had to descend the ravine. (53-54)

In passages such as this, the participant's reaction to his environment is revealed; scene reflects the state of mind and so contributes to the action and the suspense plot. In order to achieve this end, the language becomes necessarily more figurative, poetic, even melodramatic. In similar passages, Tommo can hardly be said to be an objective observer, for his own pain, and fear of the savages, colour his vision.

The difficulty of trying to include both objective reports of the natives, and personal, subjective reactions which are necessary for suspense, becomes more pronounced once Tommo is a guest in the valley. The long passages of detail needed to convince publisher and audience of the authenticity of the account causes a necessary break in the dramatic presentation of events. Suspense has to be dropped in the ethnographic sections, for it would be ridiculous to expect that an extremely apprehensive Tommo could painstakingly describe tappa making while his teeth were chattering with fear. This was not necessarily a weakness in the book, for intense suspense needs some relief, which is provided both by Melville's humour and the more relaxed relation of fact. The problem is that the reader is allowed to forget Tommo's and thus his own early fear of the natives because the attractiveness of life in the Happy Valley is overwhelmingly substantiated by detailed description; after all, one thinks,

the accounts of the ferocity of the Typees were really just foul rumours spread by treacherous natives, biased clergy and cruel invaders.

In order to fully appreciate the complex interaction of ethnographic material with the suspense-adventure plot of Typee, Melville's various uses of this material can now be more carefully assessed. Let me undertake such an assessment by explaining first what I see as an advantageous use, that is, the contributions of his ethnography to the development of themes, and then the uses which are disadvantageous to the attempt to create a unified work, that is, the dissipation of suspense by the weight of fact.

First of all, ethnography works in cooperation with the Edenic picture which Melville gives of the attractive islanders. Ethnography functions to give substance to the romantic ease and strangeness of life beneath the bread-fruit trees. The particulars of food, housing and social institutions contribute to a total picture of a simple people, often childlike and affectionate.

When Melville presents the idyllic life of the Typees, with their peaceful polyandry, democratic freedom and perfect health, he is in fact supported by other accounts of life on Nukahiva. Even the skeptical Anderson agrees that "As romantic as these [Melville's] accounts seem to be . . . they seem surprisingly near the truth, at least in their statement of fundamental facts."[34] Once Tommo has overcome his initial fear caused by the dreadful reports of the Typees' nature, he sees that the natives are motivated by an inner goodness which has not yet been corrupted by contact with civilization. This Rousseauian presentation is found concentrated in the long series of chapters, from fifteen to thirty-one, which provide specifically ethnographic information. The narrator's

standpoint here is that of an anthropologist who is involved in participant observation. As an "insider" he adopts some of the techniques of formal ethnography which are defined by Hortense Powdermaker:

> To understand society, the anthropologist has traditionally immersed himself in it, learning, as far as possible, to think, see, feel, and sometimes act as a member of its culture and at the same time as a trained anthropologist from another culture.[35]

As Mildred Travis observes, "In Typee, Melville describes genetic love and marriage from the point of view of an anthropologist. . . ."[36]

> If one compares Melville's treatment of love and marriage in Typee with such a modern anthropological study as Bengt Danielsson's Love in the South Seas (N.Y.: Renal and Company, 1956), he will see that Melville treats love and marriage among the cannibals like an anthropologist. Such topics as the adorable sex and their habits. . . ; games; indulgences; marriage; polyandry; divorce; infanticide; division of labors among the sexes; . . . are treated almost as scientifically by Melville the novelist as by Danielsson the modern anthropologist.[37]

In treating such topics, the fear and self-absorption which characterized Tommo in the escape and flight parts of the story have necessarily disappeared. In tone and method these parts of the book closely resemble the sources from which much of the information is drawn.

In the sections in which Tommo plays the participant observer, he yet reveals a bias almost the opposite of his earlier fears. When it suits his romantic purposes, he casually dismisses such unattractive realities as the taboo system. For Tommo, even the strict taboo against women in canoes can be easily and delightfully broken.[38] In answer to his own questions concerning the control of individual behaviour in the absence of any apparent rules, Tommo tells us that the savages are governed from within by an "inherent principle of honesty and charity towards each other" thanks to the "universally diffused perception of what is just and noble" (201). If Melville here intended to delight

readers with the wonderful beauty of the valley and its people, the accounts of Jack London and Holbrock Jackson prove that he succeeded. Jackson says: "Doubtless there are people who, having read 'Typee,' are not moved with an urgent desire to take ship for the Marquesas, but I have yet to hear of them."[39] Both London and Jackson were so impressed that they set out to meet Fayaway and her kind themselves. For who could fail to be impressed by the attractive and attentive people represented in Melville's ethnographic sections?

The specifically romantic elements are thus well served by Melville's selective ethnography. Even chapters twenty, twenty-one and twenty-seven, which were specifically added to prove that Melville had intimate knowledge of Polynesian culture,[40] contribute to this theme. Covering such events as the dances of the girls, a history of an idyllic day, discovery of monumental remains, and the social conditions and character of the Typees, Melville goes to some lengths to convince us that savage existence is perfect:

> . . . everything went on in the valley with a harmony and a smoothness unparalleled, I will venture to assert, in the most select, refined, and pious associations of mortals in Christendom. (200)

He goes on to add, "I will frankly declare, that after passing a few weeks in this valley of the Marquesas, I formed a higher estimate of human nature than I had ever before entertained" (203).

In the last part of chapter twenty-seven, we find the statement which indicates the position to which such ethnography has brought us. As a result of ethnological parallels which portray the Edenic nature of life in Typee, supporting the Typees' status as noble savages, there is no room left for evil in the readers' image of the natives. We have been

lulled into the belief that in such simplicity and peace, there can be nothing treacherous. Melville's own evidence leads him logically to a defense of their cannibalism; in doing so, his story is caught up in a conundrum from which he never successfully extricates it. As part of his defense of savagery, Melville must discredit many of the 'trumped up' accounts of cannibalism by calling such stories "extravagant fictions" (205). He does not go so far as to say that cannibalism itself is a fiction, but, he says, it is practiced "upon the bodies of slain enemies alone" (205). Along with this, his comic treatment of cannibalism through much of the book, though the humour is often black, has the effect of defusing the horror of such a crime.[41] Early in the narrative, a seaman exclaims, "'There--there's Typee. Oh, the bloody cannibals, what a meal they'd make of us if we were to take it into our heads to land! but they say they don't like sailor's flesh, it's too salt'" (25-26). Another type of humour is generated by Tommo's choice of grand words to discuss a sordid subject. Commenting on the reputation of the Typees, Tommo says they are "inveterate gormandizers of human flesh" (25). Later, Melville treats the subject with a wit that has become characteristic in any discussion of the subject.

> According to the popular fictions, the crews of vessels, . . . are eaten alive like so many dainty joints by uncivil inhabitants; and unfortunate voyagers are lured into smiling and treacherous bays; knocked in the head with outlandish warclubs; and served up with out any preliminary dressing. [Some voyagers] . . . firmly believe that there are people in the world with tastes so depraved that they would infinitely prefer a single mouthful of material humanity to a good dinner of roast beef and plum pudding. (205)

From the perspective of a comic narrator, or from the detached height of the ethnographer, Tommo can see no cause to fear for his personal safety. But this is not the case in the whole book--indeed, it contradicts the

concern which plagues Tommo sporadically and which erupts so forcefully in the last two chapters of the story.

Anderson does not seem to see the contradiction between his statement that in Typee there is a whole-hearted defense of the noble savage,[42] and his assertion that

> . . . the first third of his book derives its suspense from his fear of falling into their [the Typees'] hands, and the rest of the tale is dominated by an unrelenting apprehension that his indulgent captors, in spite of their apparent hospitality, are merely fattening him for a delayed feast.[43]

If Anderson were right, then Melville's use of suspense as a unifying force would have succeeded. But Typee breaks into two contradictory and actively warring parts when one considers the conflict between the reporter's portrayal of a romantic ideal and the same narrator's horror and fear at the unnatural habits of the natives. Melville injects elements of suspense throughout the story, but the more we learn about the pacific nature of the islanders, the less successful is the attempt to make us distrust and fear them. Tommo's attitude towards Polynesian customs, in his scientific mood, is detached and relaxed:

> In the altered frame of mind to which I have referred, every object that presented itself to my notice in the valley struck me in a new light, and the opportunities I now enjoyed of observing the manners of its inmates, tended to strengthen my favorable impressions. (126)

The depictions of the Typees' innocent enjoyments and childlike pleasures provide more information than is needed to allay the readers' fears for Tommo's welfare. Even the first account of warfare is treated humorously as there are no deaths (129-130). The vision of the fierce warriors who delight in feasts of human flesh, which was in the minds of the readers before Tommo's arrival in the valley, fades before the new image of the

gentle, playful natives presented in episodes like the battle of the pop-guns.

The detachment which precise descriptiveness calls for also means that the narrator must switch quickly from making inferences to recording direct observation. In chapter nineteen, for example, in spite of the fact that Tommo is supposed to be deeply disturbed after Marnoo's first visit, he manages to give an extremely detailed and detached account of the process of the manufacture of tappa. The language in this passage is so confidently precise and scientific that one finds Tommo's earlier apprehensions extreme--and we soon forget the narrator's unrest.

The instructive voice which Tommo must adopt as a travel guide also tends to jar the tone of what is initially a personal narration punctuated by suspense. The abruptness of the shift in voice from story-teller to instructor is apparent in the following passage:

> The captain, darting on deck from the cabin, bawled lustily for his spyglass; the mate in still louder accents hailed the mast-head with a tremendous 'where-away?' The black cook thrust his woolly head from the galley, and Boatswain, the dog, leaped up between the knight-heads, and barked most furiously. Land ho! Aye, there it was. A hardly perceptible blue irregular outline, indicating the bold contour of the lofty heights of Nukuheva.
>
> This island, although generally called one of the Marquesas, is by some navigators considered as forming one of a distinct cluster, comprising the islands of Ruhooka, Ropo, and Nukuheva; upon which three the appellation of the Washington Group has been bestowed. They form a triangle, and lie within the parallels of 8° 38' and 9° 32' South latitude, and 139° 20' and 140° 10' West longitude from Greenwich. (10-11)

The fear of falling into the hands of the Typees is, as Anderson commented, the dominant theme in the first third of the book. Even after their arrival in the vale, Toby's presence maintains the suspense for he persists in distrusting the motives of reputedly perfidious savages. But the effort to keep the suspense alive begins to flag soon after Toby's

disappearance. The Typees' conduct may be "inexplicable" after Toby's escape, still they "multiplied their acts of kindness and attention" towards Tommo. The necessary ambivalence which added to the theme of suspense begins to solidify into a warm appreciation of the Typees' good qualities in the middle and late chapters. By chapter sixteen the only real anxiety which remains concerns the "mysterious disease" in Tommo's leg; even the horror at the impossibility of escape is removed once the ideal nature of the Typees' life is revealed.

Chapter seventeen signals a new attitude and perception on Tommo's part as his leg heals and he is able to become a real participant in the joys of the valley; he now gives himself "up to the passing hour." With his new vision, Tommo is able to see clearly the advantages of savage life; there are continual comparisons between the ease of savage life and the artificiality of civilized existence. Melville's parallels favour savage life every time; the efforts of outsiders like the evangelists are revealed as misguided and corrupting. His ethnography and ethnology combine to give a very partial picture of a life in which medicine and welfare are completely superfluous.

With Marnoo's coming in the next chapter, Tommo again reminds the reader that he is indeed a prisoner in this Happy Valley. But following Tommo's "desponding reflections" and apprehensions as to the reason for his detention, the basic satisfactions of the relaxed life again compel. Tommo deems it expedient to assume a "tranquil and cheerful demeanor" (144); the reader finds no such discipline necessary for the advantages of savage bliss are already apparent.

There follows the longest continuous sequence of ethnography in the book which is only finally abruptly terminated in chapter thirty-two.

This chapter intensifies the suspense of captivity and renews the long dormant fear of being eaten alive. The dread of being permanently disfigured by facial tattoos, which is far more believable as an agent of suspense, is dropped at the beginning of chapter thirty-two in favour of a return to the fear of cannibalism. Before chapter thirty-two there had been occasional hints at suspense, but with such long chapters as twenty-six and twenty-seven and thirty-one serving as ethnographic catch-alls, one finds it a little difficult to believe in the terrible fate which Tommo stresses in his later subjective frame of mind. Not only does the accumulation of detail and anecdote slow down the action while it satisfies the nineteenth-century reader's desire for facts, it also grinds the theme of suspense to a halt. The more detail given about Typee, the less one sympathizes with Tommo's urgent desire for escape. Too often, as Melville himself admits, the inclusion of ethnographic material becomes a matter of cataloguing "useful" information; the book becomes "sadly discursive" (226) and the story limps--all this in spite of the fact that, from the shifts within the book itself, it appears that Melville would have preferred to stress drama rather than informativeness. He constantly returns to the use of dramatic techniques of description and pace which move his plot forward, preceding this return to drama with remarks like "but to return" and "to return to my narrative."

Finally, the ethnographic particulars compiled by the conscientious Tommo preclude readers shifting back to a superstitious attitude towards the natives. As a result of the facts which we have learned about Typees, the final suspense, which hinges on Tommo's renewed fears of cannibalism, seems melodramatic and contrived. When, for example, Tommo says "We were well aware that if they [the Typees] succeeded in

intercepting us they would practise upon us the manoeuvre which has proved so fatal to many a boat's crew in these seas" (252), readers remember that Tommo earlier assured us that the tales of natives attacking and eating boats' crews were monstrous fictions.[44] After the slowly paced ethnographic chapters, Tommo's sudden fear and rapid escape seem even more unconvincing. As Donald Houghton notes in his article, "The Incredible Ending of Melville's Typee," "The ending of Typee . . . appears to have been written hurriedly, and it strikes the reader as a confusing and arbitrary addition to, rather than an organic extension of, the main narrative."[45] Houghton comments on the combination of adventure and travel writing, and comes to this conclusion:

> Once having built up this suspense, Melville could hardly let his book end as unclimactically as a travel lecture. Since Tommo is the narrator, the reader knows from the beginning that Tommo, like Ishmael in Moby-Dick, does escape, and he has every reason to believe he will find out how. Furthermore, after the build-up of suspense, the reader would have every reason to expect that Tommo's escape from the Typees will be at least as dramatic and convincing as Melville's careful account of Tommo's escape from the ship to the valley of the Typees and the detailed description of life in the valley itself. But we find, in fact, that the ending of Typee is no such thing. . . . It appears that Melville had said all he wanted to say before Tommo's escape, but sensing that his travel book had indeed turned into something of an adventure tale that needed a dramatic ending he tacked one on.[46]

The total effect of the ethnographic material in Typee is to present a solid reality in which there is no place for the fears of an apprehensive narrator. The suspense aspects of the book suffer irreparable damage as a result of the ethnology which presents the savages in such a happy light. Because Typee was constructed as a travel book, it was more than the inexperienced Melville could do to completely integrate his factual material into the suspense-adventure plot. As Joan Joffe Hall points out in her discussion of Melville's continued use of interpolations,

the problem with Typee is that the facts tend to exist for their own sake, contributing little to theme or action. Perhaps J. A. Ward puts it most clearly when he compares the common faults of Typee and White-Jacket. He says that Melville's problem in his later novel was

> somewhat the same problem he had in Typee. Though the expository passages in White-Jacket are much more obviously and significantly linked with the theme, there is no real balance between fact and meaning; . . . the physical reality Melville describes outweighs the symbolic equivalent because there is a great deal of description . . . that can only be accepted on the literal level.[47]

Though Ward's analysis expresses some of my objections, Hall's view is closer to my own conclusion, for Hall sees even less connection between fact and theme in Typee. She thinks that the gulf between the plot and the ethnography is so great that the story is completely detachable from the main body of factual material. She says that "the plot of Typee, which is a flimsy handle for the baggage of travelogue, is punctuated by long and tiresome essays on the anthropology, sociology and history of the Marquesas."[48]

This is an overstatement of the problem, for it has been shown that Melville manages to integrate successfully a fair amount of the expository material with his romantic theme. But Hall's point of view is essentially that of the modern reader who has more sophisticated expectations of a suspense story. The lack of unity, the generation of suspense which seems too often contrived in the final chapters, the tediousness of much of the plodding detail, the breakdown of mystery and suspense in the long expository chapters, all detract from the merits of Melville's first publication.

Melville was aware of the defects of his first book even a short time after its publication. In a letter to John Murray, written to explain

the publication of a bowdlerized edition which was put out by Wiley and Putnam in the United States, Melville makes this comment on the criticisms of missionaries which had been deleted by himself at his American publishers' insistence:

> Such passages are altogether foreign to the adventure, & altho' they may possess a temporary interest now, to some, yet so far as the wide & permanent popularity of the work is conserned, their exclusion will certainly be beneficial, for to that end, the less the book has to carry along with it the better.[49]

In the same letter Melville discusses unity in the work; he says with emphasis, "I am persuaded that the interest of the book almost wholly consists in the intrinsick merit of the narrative alone--& that other portions, however interesting they may be in themselves, only serve to impede the story."[50] Having intended his book as a travel story with strong elements of adventure, he was also disturbed by the title under which the book appeared in England. Murray first published it as a "Narrative of Four Months' Residence Among the Natives of a Valley of the Marquesas; or; a Peep at Polynesian Life,"[51] in an attempt to emphasize the educational value of the work as a treatise. Melville insisted that the title was naturally, from the narrative, "Typee," for it hinted at the "strangeness & novelty" of the story.[52]

The question remains, would Typee be a better work without its ethnographic completeness? The answer must be a divided one. For while factual information gives the requisite "skeleton of reality"[53] to a romantic idyll and contributes to a romantic view of the islanders, it often confines the artist's talents and buries his attempt at a sustained fiction. At this point, having considered and analyzed the interaction of exposition with the suspense-adventure plot in Typee and the conflict

which is apparent between the factual and fictional material, I would finally like to consider some of the observations by critics who are aware of the two-sided nature of Typee's ethnography. In light of the conclusions which I have reached after a study of the effects which ethnography has on romance and suspense, the critics' analyses of Typee must be seen as limited and finally inadequate for they do not deal successfully with the relationship between fact and fiction.

J. A. Ward comments, "In Typee Tommo's effort to understand his environment and the nature of his captivity provides not only the suspense of the novel but also its underlying thematic movement."[54] Ward sees Tommo's search in epistemological terms; his quest for the reality behind appearances is symbolized in his continued efforts to characterize and understand the natives. If this were true, there would be justification for many of the digressions in the book. The explanation given by Ward is tempting, especially as the writer of Typee later produced Moby-Dick which is specifically concerned with a probing for epistemological certainty. But there is really little evidence in Typee to support Ward's defense. Large sections of ethnographic material defy the existence of the unified conception which Ward wants to see in Typee. Faced with the largely expository middle chapters, Ward is forced to partially acknowledge defeat, for he admits that although "there are philosophical and psychological reasons for [the] extensive analyses . . . [which Melville gives to factual material,] such reasons do not make artistically valid essentially uninteresting material."[55]

Bruce Rosen, in spite of his early recognition of the pot-boiler aspects of the book, also attempts to justify the interpolations by suggesting that they are closely related to theme; he suggests that

Melville included them "according to the needs of his deeper vision" "for his own thematic ends."[56] Rosen discusses the romantic and, what he calls, anti-romantic themes of Typee. He recognizes that Tommo's emphasis on the cannibal propensities of the Typees works against his portrayal of them as noble and idyllically pastoral people.[57] Rosen states this, but his only conclusion is that two counter themes coexist in Typee; he never goes on to consider the effect which one has on the other. The problem with two contradictory thematic ends remains unexamined in Rosen's discussion, so that, finally, his justification of digressive material as a part of a counter-theme is not satisfactory for it means that the reader must look at the book in sections without ever really putting the parts together. When Rosen tries to see Typee as a unified work, he does so by discussing a larger, encompassing theme which draws together the divergent aspects. This general theme is "the seduction of the innocent primitive by the corrupt civilizer."[58] Rosen, however, does not explain how this incorporates the anti-romantic theme he has observed; he does not show how the suspense elements of Typee, which depend on the fact that evil (cannibalism) already exists among the isolated natives, are justified under such a general theme.

Robert Stanton's[59] attempt to see Typee as a symbolic work falls apart in the ethnographic sections. As Rosen points out "all the specific allusions which link Tommo with Satan occur between Tommo's escape from the ship and his 'capture' in the valley. . . . In fact, the many chapters during which Typee Valley is described in detail contain very little that specifically suggests Milton's poem."[60] To treat the whole of Typee as a carefully thought out archetypal presentation is to see in the work that which is not really there. The greatest portion of the ethnographic detail

has no mythic or symbolic overtones; the language in these chapters is scientific, not poetic or figurative. As Houghton points out, the ending of Typee also indicates that Melville was unaware, and did not develop, the potentially "complex symbolic meanings inherent in Tommo's situation"[61] which involves a choice between a mindless paradise and a more rigorous civilization. Stanton never really considers what effect the particularity of the ethnographic sections has on a work which is potentially symbolic. The physical realism which Melville often skillfully creates through his ethnography makes the work more of a travelogue describing real places than a symbolic novel. The novel which Stanton recognizes is only embryonic; it is never properly developed due to the limitations of the form which Melville adopted for his first work.

Melville himself eventually felt the "restraint of actuality." He complained in a review of J. Ross Browne's Etchings of a Whaling Cruise and Captain Ringbolt's Sailor's Life and Sailor's Yarns which appeared in The Literary World, March 6, 1847, that "of late years there have been revealed so many plain, matter-of-fact details connected with nautical life that at the present day the poetry of salt water is very much on the wane." He goes on to say, "Mr. J. Ross Browne's narrative tends still further to impair the charm with which poetry & fiction have invested the sea. It is a book of unvarnished facts. . . ."[62] This criticism of Browne's method can also be seen as a general comment on the limitations which travel literature imposed on an artistic writer who wanted to give the reader something more than "unvarnished facts."

The restrictions of travel literature, as well as his own inexperience as a writer, did not prevent Melville from investing some charm and poetry in his first book, but the nature of much of the material

which was included to convince readers of the reality of the adventure finally limited the possibility for the exercise of imagination and poetic artistry. As a result, the development of the fictional aspects of the book, which give it much of its continued appeal, was inhibited. Melville experimented with fiction unrestricted by fact in Mardi, but in his best work he would achieve greatness through the development of what Ward correctly articulates as "a tighter unity between exposition and narration, a closer relationship between digression and theme."[63]

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Typee is, then, only a partially successful book which nonetheless reveals the natural talents of an inexperienced writer. For Melville was not yet capable of overcoming the restrictions of the style and form of the travel book, in spite of the fact that his preface tells us that he was aware of problems with the genre. The problems of the form, along with his own only partially developed skills, in fact drag Typee back to the very things which Melville himself criticizes.

Typee suffers from the tensions which exist between the demands of the travelogue and the methods employed in writing a good suspense-adventure story. The factual matter demands an objective and precise detailing of that which is observed; mystery or adventure writing thrives on more melodramatic descriptions of subjective experiences. In the end, the two aspects of Typee cannot lead a complementary existence, for the particularity of the ethnographic descriptions, along with the ideal picture which they present of island life, work against suspense and mystery.

This thesis has attempted to demonstrate both the success and failure of Melville's effort to integrate ethnographic matter into a work which has a framework of mystery and suspense. In the course of the examination I have examined the significant changes which Melville made in his source materials, in the areas of both style and content. I have shown that at least part of Melville's ethnography is included for thematic

reasons and contributes to the exotic picture of Polynesian life; some of the information which relates stories of cannibalism also serves the end of intensifying suspense. But finally, Typee contains a large amount of factual information which limits Melville's attempt to create a unified, undigressive work. It is this material which makes Melville's book more like a well-written travel book in which fact serves the end of scientific thoroughness. As such, it limits the artistic potential of Tommo's experience among the cannibals. Before he wrote a truly great work, Melville had to do more experimenting with the place of fact in a work of fiction; Typee was only the beginning.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

[1]Charles R. Anderson, "Contemporary American Opinions of Typee and Omoo," American Literature, 9 (1937), 2-3.

[2]Anderson, "Contemporary Opinions," p. 8. Quotation originally in the review in Knickerbocker Magazine, 27 (May 1846), 450.

[3]Merrell R. Davis, Mardi: A Chartless Voyage (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 18.

[4]Freeman Hunt, "Review," Merchant's Magazine and Commercial Review, 14 (May 1846), cited by Anderson in "Contemporary Opinions," p. 11.

[5]Leon Howard, "Historical Note," Typee, eds. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1968), p. 286.

[6]Jay Leyda, The Melville Log (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1951), p. 200.

[7]Clarence Gohdes, "British Interest in American Literature," American Literature, 13 (1941-1942), 356, 360.

[8]Herman Melville, "Letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1? June 1851," The Letters of Herman Melville, eds. Merrell R. Davis and William H. Gilman (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1960), p. 130.

[9]Anderson, "Contemporary Opinions," p. 22.

[10]Charles Anderson, Melville in the South Seas (1939; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966); Robert Forsythe, "Herman Melville in the Marquesas," Philological Quarterly, 15 (Jan. 1936), 1-15 and "Herman Melville in Tahiti," Philological Quarterly, 16 (Jan. 1937), 344-357; Ida Leeson, "The Mutiny on the Lucy Ann," Philological Quarterly, 19 (Oct. 1940), 370-379.

[11]Ida Leeson, pp. 370-379.

[12]Anderson, Melville in the South Seas, pp. 190-191.

[13]Herman Melville, "Preface," Typee (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1968), p. xiv. "There are some things related in the narrative which will be sure to appear strange, or perhaps entirely incomprehensible, to the reader; but they cannot appear more so to him than they did to the author at the time. He has stated such matters just as they occurred, and leaves every one to form his own opinion concerning them; trusting that his anxious desire to speak the unvarnished truth will gain for him the confidence of his readers."

[14]The scene from David Porter's Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean, II, pp. 116-117, 119 is reprinted in Anderson, Melville in the South Seas, pp. 172-173.

[15]Anderson, Melville in the South Seas, p. 191.

[16]Lewis Mumford, Herman Melville: A Study of His Life and Vision, 2nd ed. (1929; New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1962), p. 84.

[17]Howard C. Key, "The Influence of Travel Literature Upon Melville's Fictional Technique," Diss. Stanford 1953, p. 106.

[18]Robert Stanton, "Typee and Milton: Paradise Well Lost," Modern Language Notes, 74 (May 1959), 407-411.

[19]J. A. Ward, "The Function of the Cetological Chapters in Moby-Dick," American Literature, 28 (1956-57), 165.

[20]William B. Dillingham, Artist in the Rigging (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1972), pp. 9-10.

[21]Ward, p. 167.

[22]Charles Feidelson, Symbolism and American Literature (Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press. 1953), p. 163.

[23]Feidelson, p. 165.

[24]Anderson, Melville in the South Seas, p. 191.

[25]Russell Thomas, "Yarn for Melville's Typee," Philological Quarterly, 15 (Jan. 1936), 16-29.

[26]Anderson, Melville in the South Seas, p. 191.

[27]Davis, Mardi: A Chartless Voyage, p. 11. "Even cannibalism, which had served Melville earlier in his narrative as a means of arousing suspense, was here somewhat inconsistently described as not detracting from the humane and virtuous qualities of the Typees. . . ."

[28]See Newton Arvin, Herman Melville (New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1950); Merrell Davis, Mardi: A Chartless Voyage; Howard C. Key, "The Influence of Travel Literature Upon Melville's Fictional Technique"; Bruce J. Rosen, "Typee and Omoo: Melville's Literary Apprenticeship," Diss. New York 1965; F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance (1941; rpt. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1954).

[29]Matthiessen, "Melville," American Renaissance, pp. 371-514. At one point Matthiessen states that the cetology in Moby-Dick "prevents the drama from gliding off into a world to which we feel no normal tie whatever" (p. 416); Nathalia Wright, "Form as Function in Melville," PMLA, 67 (June, 1952), 330-340.

[30]Ward, p. 167.

[31]Ward, p. 169.

[32]Ward, p. 171.

[33]Joan Joffe Hall, "Melville's Use of Interpolations," University Review, 33 (Autumn 1966), 52. For a different view of the purpose of interpolations see Richard Blackmur, "The Craft of Herman Melville: A Putative Statement," The Expense of Greatness (1940; Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1958), pp. 139-166.

CHAPTER II

[1]W. Patrick Strauss, Americans in Polynesia (East Lansing: Michigan State Univ. Press, 1963), p. 4.

[2]James Cook, Captain Cook's Three Voyages to the Pacific Ocean (1797); David Porter, Journal of A Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean (1815); Edward Fanning, Voyages Round the World (1833); Charles Wilkes, Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition (1845).

[3]Strauss, p. 149.

[4]Max Meisel, A Bibliography of American Natural History (Brooklyn, N.Y.: The Premier Publishing Co., 1926), II, 706-798. Cited by Howard C. Key, "The Influence of Travel Literature Upon Melville's

Fictional Technique," Diss. Stanford 1953, pp. 110-111.

[5]Strauss, p. 155.

[6]William Ellis, Polynesian Researches (London: Fisher, Son, & Jackson, 1831), I, vii.

[7]Ellis, I, vii-viii.

[8]G. H. Von Langsdorff, Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World . . . 1803-1807 (1813; rpt. New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), I, 97-98.

[9]Key, pp. 86-87.

[10]Merton Sealts, "Melville's Reading," Harvard Library Bulletin, 2 (1948), 141-163.

[11]Russell Thomas, "Yarn for Melville's Typee," Philological Quarterly, 15 (January 1936), 18-19. Thomas points out several passages which Melville takes from Stewart's work, including that of my second example. He even notes that Melville proceeded to present the pieces of information in the same order in which they appear in Stewart's book: "With one exception the paging from both books is in numerical order" (27).

[12]Charles Stewart, A Visit to the South Seas, ed. and abridged by William Ellis (1831; London: Fisher, Son, & Jackson, 1832), pp. 128, 129, 140.

[13]Herman Melville, Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life, eds. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1968), p. 11. All future references are to this edition and are included parenthetically within the text.

[14]Stewart, pp. 156-157.

[15]Stewart, p. 146.

[16]David Porter, Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean (Philadelphia: 1815), II, 116. Quoted by Charles Anderson, Melville in the South Seas (1939; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966), p. 174.

[17]Stewart, pp. 186-187.

[18]Stewart, pp. 191-192.

[19]Anderson, p. 175.

[20]Langsdorff, I, 92-95.

[21]Stewart, p. 139.

[22]Bruce J. Rosen, "Typee and Omoo: Melville's Literary Apprenticeship," Diss. New York 1965, p. 46.

[23]Porter, II, 114-115, 117. Quoted by Anderson, pp. 176-177.

[24]Anderson, p. 177.

[25]Anderson, p. 151.

[26]Langsdorff, I, 22.

[27]Stewart, p. 185.

[28]Stewart, p. 148.

[29]Stewart, p. 162.

[30]Ellis, I, 83-84. Ellis says in another place that "Physically considered the Marquesans are described as among the most perfect of the human species." III, 314.

[31]Stewart, p. 241.

[32]Langsdorff, I, 138.

[33]Langsdorff, I, 132.

[34]Porter, II, 119. Quoted by Anderson, p. 173.

[35]Langsdorff, I, 149.

[36]Stewart, pp. 136, 160.

[37]Anderson, p. 101.

[38]Anderson, p. 456 note.

[39]Porter, II, 44-45. Quoted by Anderson, p. 103.

[40]Stewart, p. 210.

[41]Stewart, pp. 162-163.

CHAPTER III

[1]Charles Robert Anderson, Melville in the South Seas (1939; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966), pp. 33, 195, 347.

[2]Merrell R. Davis, Mardi: A Chartless Voyage (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), pp. 3-4.

[3]Howard C. Key, "The Influence of Travel Literature Upon Melville's Fictional Technique," Diss. Stanford 1953, p. 3. See also Van Wyck Brooks, "Melville the Traveller," The Times of Melville and Whitman (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1947), p. 152; and William Charvat, Literary Publishing in America 1790-1850 (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Univ. Press, 1959), pp. 74-75.

[4]Only two men reported a visit to the actual Typee Valley before 1842. "Porter's two expeditions through Typee Valley took place in the latter part of November, 1813; Stewart's ship remained at Typee Bay August 5-12, 1829, using this anchorage as a point of departure for various excursions inland." Anderson, Melville in the South Seas, pp. 98, 447 note.

[5]Melville's published juvenilia consisted of several letters signed "Philologean" written in 1838, reprinted in The Letters of Herman Melville, eds. Merrell R. Davis and William H. Gilman (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1960), pp. 7-16. "Fragments from a Writing Desk," I and II, published in the Democratic Press and Lansingburgh Advertiser, 1839, are reprinted in full in Jay Leyda's The Melville Log (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1951), I, 83-84.

[6]The first chapter of Key's thesis is a good source for a concise history of the travelogue.

[7]Anderson, p. 121. Anderson lists Cook, Porter, Stewart, Fanning, the anonymous Circumnavigation of the Globe, and Langsdorff. In other places he mentions Ellis, Von Kotzebue and Russell.

[8]William Ellis, Polynesian Researches (London: Fisher, Son, & Jackson, 1831), I, xii.

[9]Charles Stewart, A Visit to the South Seas, ed. and abridged by William Ellis (1831; London: Fisher, Son, & Jackson, 1832), p. xii.

[10]G. H. Von Langsdorff, Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World . . . 1803 - 1807 (1813; rpt. New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), I, vi. The irony of Langsdorff's statement, as Anderson points out on page 103 of his book, is that the naturalist appears to have a vivid imagination which colours his account. His statement here is a defense against any charges of falsification--truth, Langsdorff says, is stranger than fiction--you will know the truth by the fact that it is very strange indeed.

[11]Leon Howard, "Historical Note," Typee, eds. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1968), p. 284.

[12]Leyda, "Gansevoort Melville replies to John Murray," October 21, 1845: "The Author will doubtless be flattered to hear that his production seems to so competent a judge as yourself that of a 'practised writer'. . . ." p. 199.

[13]Howard, "Historical Note," p. 293. Howard also tells us that in the revised edition of July, 1846, "the literary allusion to 'Sylphides' (152. 23-4), and the artistic allusion to Tenier's saints (211.3)" were all omitted "in a silent effort to quiet John Murray's worries by making the book read more like the work of a common sailor." p. 291.

[14]George Paston (Symonds), At John Murray's: Records of a Literary Circle 1843-1892 (London, 1932), quoted in Leyda, p. 200.

[15]J. A. Ward, "The Function of the Cetological Chapters in 'Moby-Dick,'" American Literature, 28 (1956-57), 315.

[16]Raymond Weaver, Herman Melville, Mariner and Mystic (1921; rpt. New York: Pageant Books, 1961), pp. 206-207.

[17]Herman Melville, "Letter to John Murray, 15 July 1846," The Letters of Herman Melville, p. 39.

[18]Anderson, p. 191.

[19]H. S. Salt, "Marquesan Melville," Gentleman's Magazine, 272 (March, 1892), 250.

[20]Herman Melville, "Travelling," reprinted in John Howard Birss' article, "'Travelling': A New Lecture by Herman Melville," The New England Quarterly, 7 (1934), 726.

[21]Key, p. 24.

[22]Melville, "Letter to John Murray, 25 March 1848," The Letters of Herman Melville, p. 70.

[23]Key, p. 30.

[24]Ellis, I, 204.

[25]Ellis, I, pp. 67, 370.

[26]Stewart, p. 134.

[27]Stewart, p. 135.

[28]Langsdorff, I, 109.

[29]Paul Witherington makes this point in "The Art of Melville's 'Typee,'" Arizona Quarterly, 26 (Summer 1970), 150.

[30]Dictionary of World Literary Terms, ed. Joseph T. Shipley (1943; Boston: The Writer, Inc., 1970), p. 206.

[31]See Nathalia Wright, "Form as Function in Melville," PMLA, 67 (June 1952), p. 336.

[32]Bayard Taylor, Cyclopedea of Modern Travel (Cincinnati: Moore, Wilstach, Keys & Co., 1856), quoted in Key's thesis, p. 36.

[33]Newton Arvin, "Melville and the Gothic Novel," American Pantheon (New York: Dell, 1967), p. 110.

[34]Anderson, p. 132.

[35]Rosalie H. Wax, Doing Fieldwork (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), Chapter I. She discusses the role of the "insider" in ethnographic research. The participant observer is defined by Hortense Powdermaker, Stranger and friend: the way of an anthropologist (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1967), quoted by Wax, p. 3.

[36]Mildred K. Travis, "Mardi: Melville's Allegory of Love," Emerson Society Quarterly, 43 (2nd. Qt., 1966), 88. Travis notices how different Melville's practice is in Mardi, a romance, than in Typee, a travel book.

[37]Travis, p. 93 note.

[38]Even the rain which makes life wretched for Tommo and Toby after their escape stops forever once they reach the Happy Valley. As Leon Howard indicates in his "Historical Note," Melville will alter circumstances to add to the charm of events. For example, the Abstract Log of the Acushnet for June 23 reads "squally [weather] came to Anchor Nookaheva Bay in 9 fathoms." Leyda, p. 128. It is hardly likely that in such weather a flotilla of maidens greeted the boat, but Melville's account makes much more entertaining reading, of course. Howard also reveals that "Fayaway's Lake" never existed, p. 292.

[39]Holbrock Jackson, Southward Ho! (New York: 1915), p. 9. See also Jack London, "Typee," Pacific Monthly, 23 (March, 1910), 268.

[40]Leyda, pp. 200-201, Gansevoort Melville's letter of December 6, 1845, states: "The bulk of the new matter consists of three new chapters, numbered respectively 20--21--& 27, which are in my humble opinion less amenable than the others to the faults you have pointed out, and from their subject matter, especially that of Chapter 27, will go far to give a more life-like air to the whole, an[d] parry the incredulity of those who may be disposed to regard the work as an ingenious fiction."

[41]For a discussion of the comic styles in Typee see Joseph Firebaugh, "Humorist as Rebel: The Melville of Typee," Nineteenth Century Fiction, 9 (September 1954), 108-120; and Bartlett C. Jones, "American Frontier Humor in Melville's Typee," New York Folklore Quarterly, 15 (Winter 1959), 283-288.

[42]Anderson, p. 178.

[43]Anderson, p. 108.

[44]Donald Houghton, "The Incredible Ending of Melville's Typee," Emerson Society Quarterly, 22 (1st. Qt., 1961), 30.

[45]Houghton, p. 29.

[46]Houghton, pp. 30-31.

[47]Ward, p. 167.

[48]Joan Joffe Hall, "Melville's Use of Interpolations," University Review (Kansas), 33 (Autumn 1966), 51.

[49]Melville, "Letter to John Murray, 15 July 1846," The Letters of Herman Melville, p. 39.

[50]Melville, "Letter to John Murray, 15 July 1846," The Letters of Herman Melville, p. 39.

[51]Leyda, p. 204.

[52]Melville, "Letter to John Murray, 15 July 1846," The Letters of Herman Melville, pp. 40-41.

[53]Melville, "Letter to Hawthorne, 13 August 1852," The Letters of Herman Melville, p. 157. The complete phrase from the famous "Agatha" letter is "a skeleton of actual reality."

[54]Ward, p. 165.

[55]Ward, p. 166.

[56]Bruce J. Rose, "Typee and Omoo: Melville's Literary Apprenticeship," Diss. New York 1965, pp. 83, and 83 note.

[57]Rose, p. 63.

[58]Rosen, p. 112. See also Edwin Eigner's article for a position contrary to mine, "The Romantic Unity of Melville's Omoo," Philological Quarterly, 46 (January 1967), 95-108.

[59]Robert Stanton, "Typee and Milton: Paradise Well Lost," Modern Language Notes, 74 (May 1959), 407-411. See also Bernard Rosenthall, "Elegy for Jack Chase," Studies in Romanticism, 10 (Summer 1971), 213-229.

[60]Rosen, p. 115.

[61]Houghton, p. 30.

[62]Leyda, p. 238.

[63]Ward, p. 166.

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